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WHO-WHERE-WHEN?

dwb

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SPECIAL ISSUE!

20 YEARS OF TOM BAKER

DreamWatch Bulletin 128
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No room for me to comment this issue, after my struggles to fill the column last month, so just two quick notes... Firstly, Gary informs me that the fanzine review column won't be continuing beyond DWB130, so could editors stop sending copies, as the final column is already full...and secondly, I'd like to mention that the E-mail address above gets through to me at home, not to DWB HQ, so if you're calling with a query about subscriptions or such like, it'll probably be quicker to contact the editorial address direct...

ANTHONY

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Cover: We salute the 20th anniversary of Tom Baker's swashbuckling portrayal of the Doctor (*The Masque of Mandragora*, 1976 © The Fitzroy Source/BBC Video)

Page 2: More classic Tom shots (clockwise) *Terror of the Zygons* (1975), *The Masque of Mandragora* (1976), *The Robots of Death* (with David Baillie as Dask, 1977) © The Fitzroy Source/ BBC Video

Back cover: Stephen Greif as Travis - standard Nation fare? (BLAKE'S 7 on UK Gold, Saturdays at 6pm) © The Fitzroy Source/BBC Video

THANKS TO: J Jeremy Bentham, Anthony McKay, BBS Listings, BBC Video, Steve Roberts, Virgin Books, Kathleen Toth, Sky One Publicity, BBC Publicity, Bill Baggs & BBV, Roger Clarke.

NEXT ISSUE: Due out July 8th!

Odo Interviewed - *Rene Auberjonois speaks...**All Good Things**, the time-spanning final episode of THE NEXT GENERATION...**The Siege of Troi** - A Counsellor's view of the Counsellor...**The STAR TREK survey...PLUS The Seeds of Doom** - on video at last...**AND MUCH MORE!!***

Competition Results (DWB126)

For the Dalek film tickets: Doctor Who's relatives are Susan (Roberta Tovey), Barbara (Jennie Linden) and Louise (Jill Curzon); the winners are David Brown, Barry Delve, Adam Fronteras & Moray Laing.

For the Avengers tapes: Anthony Ainley is the DOCTOR WHO star who appears in *Noon Doomsday* (alongside a number of WHO guest stars - thank you all!); the winners are Julie Johnson, N Spencer, Trevor Ewles, , N Herwin, and M Lees.

MEDIA TAKEN IN BY IDLE GOSSIP

PROMINENT press stories announcing Eric Idle (right) as the lead in "The New Adventures of DOCTOR WHO" have been dismissed as rubbish by the BBC, who have accused several newspapers - including *The Mail on Sunday* who ran a front-page lead - of not bothering to check the facts.

In perhaps the quietest month since news of Amblin's takeover became known, and as the world waited for major network CBS to come to a decision over whether or not to sign up the series (see right), DWB made a few investigations of our own to discover how this fable took wing - and soon discovered that all fingers point to Idle himself!

Apparently, in true Pythonesque style, the actor heard about Amblin's plans to revive DOCTOR WHO while shooting the company's latest picture, *Casper The Friendly Ghost*, and suggested to the movie's producer how brilliant he'd be in the role. He then, allegedly, contacted a press agency and repeated the claim, hoping that the resultant publicity - which unfortunately got somewhat distorted along the way - might bring him to Steven Spielberg's attention and encourage the director to cast him in the role, though insiders claim Spielberg simply laughed off the suggestion!

Meanwhile, Spielberg's preferred choice, Alan Rickman - currently shooting a film in Ireland with Hugh Grant - has reportedly said no to the suggestion...before he was even asked!

***•Fans concerned that Amblin** will neglect 26 years of continuity in favour of their own can appear to be reassured. A source within the company has disclosed that a 'bible' has been compiled for the new DOCTOR WHO production team to refer to - based on the series' entire BBC career! (PR)*

***•BBC1 luvvies' quiz - THAT'S** ENTERTAINMENT, on May 23 - asked panelist Nicola Pagett, "Who, out of Peter Cushing, Harrison Ford and Eric Idle, is the next Doctor Who?" Pagett answered, "None of them - it's Alan Rickman", to which compere Mike Smith said, "No, it's Eric Idle". It seems that even the BBC's own research departments don't go far enough in checking the facts!*

STOP PRESS

Amblin/CBS Deal Off!

AS DWB went to press (June 8), we were disappointed to learn that the proposed acquisition to CBS of the Amblin-produced DOCTOR WHO has fallen through. Amblin representatives have confirmed that they are now in negotiation with another major US network. (More in DWB129...)

DREAMWATCH Bulletin by Gary Leigh

THERE HAVE BEEN developments aplenty since this column last went to press two months ago.

NEW DWB EDITOR

Anthony Brown's successor as editor of DWB, as from issue 131, has been appointed. He is Anthony Clark - a regular contributor to this magazine since 1990. Anthony has just completed his finals following a two-year return to university,and now freed from the shackles of education, a major overhaul is currently being planned together with a fresh new look to take DWB into the second half of the Nineties. DWB will, of course, continue to represent the interests of the fans of telefantasy first and foremost. It will simply be an even more enjoyable and up-to-the-minute magazine...

For the first time a DWB 'bible' is being compiled detailing our ethos and guidelines for writers, which will be obtainable free of charge in due course.

DREAMWATCH '94

Preparations for our major convention at the Earls Court Park Inn International over the weekend of October 29-30 continue to gather pace with a major new development. As you will have noted from the advertisement last month, a distinguished and varied guest list is being assembled combined with a programme designed to ensure that it is a packed two days that no attendee will forget...

Unforeseen theatrical commitments have prevented Deborah Watling and Nicholas Courtney from taking part in the *Downtime* production as originally scheduled, and since both the characters of Victoria and the Brigadier feature heavily in Marc Platt's script it has been decided to put the project on hold until 1995. In its place, however, DreamWatch '94 has enlisted the services of WHO veteran Terrance Dicks and THIRTY YEARS IN THE TARDIS maestro Kevin Davies to respectively write and direct a sixty-minute space drama which will similarly be premiered and available for purchase at the event.

It will feature a major adversary and several well known actresses and actors that have played prominent parts in DOCTOR WHO. Clearances are currently being obtained and various artists signed up, and full details will appear next issue. Those who have so far registered for *DreamWatch '94* will be notified of these details, as well as other information about the event, in the first of the progress reports to be mailed out any day now...*To register, please see advert last issue or send an SAE to the DWB editorial address.*

TELLYVISIONS

The plans for *DreamWatch '94* and DWB's major revamp have pushed our forthcoming sister title - *TellyVisions* - back a couple of months, but reaction to news of the new title has been extremely positive. If you're interested in contributing towards our nostalgia-based, mainstream television magazine, please send a sample of your work to the editorial address...

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CLUBS & LOCAL GROUPS: Purchase DWB in bulk for your members at 50p off the cover price (min. 6 issues). SAE to P.O. box for details.

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WHO-WHERE-WHEN?

THE US NETWORKS have released their finalised schedules for Fall (Autumn) 1994. Attempting to prognosticate which shows fail and which succeed is a gamble that compares to drilling for oil or digging for gold in its risks and payoffs. But shows do fail, and replacements must be ordered. What used to be called "the second season" (January onwards) takes on a new meaning, though, when one of those replacements will almost certainly be DOCTOR WHO...

Current indications have a deal between Amblin and CBS to bring the Doctor back to the screens starting at the beginning of 1995. The big question becomes *"Where will they put it?"* DOCTOR WHO is in a position that it has never really been in before: it must succeed *immediately*, or at least show a good demographic (audience profile). CBS is desperate for "good numbers" in the 18-49 age group, since its core audience is generally older and more rural than the other networks. Actually, CBS is simply desperate right now, after having eight large affiliates recently switch to Rupert Murdoch's Fox.

Assuming that it is CBS that will broadcast the show in a one-hour slot, here is how its Fall 1994 schedule compares to the rest of the networks, and most importantly, where I believe DOCTOR WHO will go when the big switch comes (all times mentioned are Eastern/Pacific Time, PM). Also, please note that Fox does not programme in the 10-11pm slot, leaving that space for their local affiliates. Furthermore, Sunday programming in the US begins at 7pm rather than at 8pm, making 22 hours a week that must be programmed (15 by Fox, which is the limit the law will allow in order for it to still maintain its syndication business).

Sunday: *Completely out. All the networks except Fox have two-hour movies broadcasting on Sunday nights. That is only the first reason, though. There are three others that are more important:*

1) 60 MINUTES at 7pm is an institution carved in stone, and will not be moved.

2) MURDER, SHE WROTE at 8pm is CBS' core series, ever-popular after a decade on the air, and Angela Lansbury has made it clear that she will end the series if moved.

3) NBC's programming of Amblin's other science fiction attractions - the new EARTH 2 at 7pm and the surprise continuation of SEAQUEST DSV AT 8PM - will force Steven Spielberg to compete against himself if WHO is placed on Sunday.

Also, the networks are very, very unsure what the move of football to Fox might do to the primetime programming afterward. Fox, in a smart move, is placing a disposable series called FORTUNE HUNTER at 7pm and will allow it to be preempted by American football to reach THE SIMPSONS at 8pm, where it moves up against both SEAQUEST DSV on NBC and LOIS AND CLARK on ABC. All bets are off until January when the football season ends.

Monday: *Completely out. Monday is CBS's strongest night, but weakening with the aging of its successful shows. If its 8 and 8:30pm sitcoms - THE BOYS ARE BACK and the returning DAVE'S WORLD - cannot establish an audience for Candace Bergen to take advantage of with the declining MURPHY BROWN, WHO might be moved into the 8-9pm slot. It would be facing incredibly tough competition on the other networks, however, with COACH on ABC, THE FRESH PRINCE OF BEL-AIR on NBC (both are successful, long-running sitcoms), and the youth favourite MELROSE PLACE on Fox. CBS will hold off any decisions on Monday programming until MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL on ABC ends in December, when CBS' ratings normally increase for MURPHY BROWN, LOVE AND WAR and NORTHERN EXPOSURE (which has proven itself a success on video, since it has not entered syndication as yet).*

Tuesday: *Completely out. Movie night for CBS, with William Shatner and his reality-based "emergency" show RESCUE 911 (911 is the American equivalent of the British 999) at 8pm. However, Big Bill might be moved to another night if former SCTV/SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE funnyman Martin Short's new sitcom, THE MARTIN SHORT SHOW, proves to be a hit at 8:30pm on NBC. Odds are low on that particular move, though.*

Wednesday: *Big, big problems for CBS on Wednesday. TOUCHED BY AN ANGEL at 9pm is "dead on arrival", and won't last six weeks. It seems that Wednesday at 9pm is the best slot for WHO, but we can hope that it never happens. Why? ABC owns that time period. It's the biggest death-slot on American TV. WHO would have to go up against Tim Allen's HOME IMPROVEMENT and Brett Butler's GRACE UNDER FIRE, both Top Ten shows (HOME IMPROVEMENT, currently being shown on Channel 4, was the Number One show on US TV this past season). It would be like CORONATION STREET all over again, but worse, since Fox has an additional threat to the target audience; the MELROSE PLACE spin-off MODELS INC., which will take a "draw the dads" strategy to an extreme that even JNT could not have imagined! If DOCTOR WHO ends up in the 9-10pm slot, I'm sorry but Tim and Brett have my allegiance, and the VCR will be on for the Doctor. 8-9pm remains a possibility, but that would put the show up against Bill Cosby's new mystery series on NBC and BEVERLY HILLS 90210 on Fox. The other networks have already given up, counter-programming standard sitcoms. CBS has a news magazine show, 48 HOURS, at 10pm, but it's a hit.*

Thursday: *All four networks have put Thursday up for grabs, with eight new shows (as opposed to six returning, and two of those are news magazines). If DOCTOR WHO is to find a home, it will be here, somewhere...*

CBS has a one-hour comedy-drama on at 8pm, DUE SOUTH, about a Canadian Mountie reassigned to, of all places, Chicago (the pilot episode got great ratings, so don't laugh too much!). It's rated to be a possible hit against weak competition that includes a controversial new one-hour comedy on ABC, MY SO-CALLED LIFE, about an angst-ridden teenage girl. Jerry Seinfeld still has a few more lives left in his Emmy-winning sitcom at 9pm on NBC, and he's being paired with another attempt by a network to win an audience for the irascible Dabney Coleman at 9:30pm in MADMAN OF THE PEOPLE, in which he plays a boorish newspaper editorial columnist (as opposed to his last two series, in which he played a boorish TV talk show host and a boorish newspaper sports columnist). The other networks are counter-programming the 9-10pm slot with adventure shows, except for CBS, which has yet another news magazine starring news anchor Connie Chung.

Possibility here: DOCTOR WHO at 8pm, followed by DUE SOUTH at 9pm, and Connie Chung gets moved to 10pm to directly compete with popular news person Diane Sawyer's news magazine on ABC - a new drama called CHICAGO HOPE (sensing a trend here, folks?) looks dead against Sawyer, the wife of director Mike Nichols - and NBC's new medical series E.R., taking the place of the departed L.A. LAW.

Friday: *If it isn't Thursday, it's going to be Friday, which is good news. Series aren't expected to do well on Friday, where the audience is minimal. If the new drama, UNDER SUSPICION, bombs, then WHO can take the 9pm slot, where its main competition will be THE X FILES on Fox. The problem is that it doesn't fit the flow of the evening. It would be bracketed by TV legend Dick Van Dyke's mystery series DIAGNOSIS MURDER and the Emmy-winning drama PICKET FENCES. WHO would have to be moved to 8pm and DIAGNOSIS MURDER to 9pm. The competition at 8pm will be ABC's sitcoms, Fox's new fantasy series M.A.N.T.I.S. and NBC's popular "reality" series UNSOLVED MYSTERIES. If CBS wants to destroy Fox's chances in SF/fantasy, either slot will probably do it, although THE X FILES has a growing, very loyal audience.*

Saturday: *Completely out. ABC has a movie, NBC sitcoms and dramas, and Fox reality shows. CBS, though, wins the night with Jane Seymour's hit series DR. QUINN, MEDICINE WOMAN at 8pm and Chuck Norris' adventure drama WALKER, TEXAS RANGER at 10, where they bracket two sitcoms. Audience flow would be interrupted, and a number of people who watch TV on Saturday nights (and there are fewer and fewer) tune in mostly for DR. QUINN.*

What are *my* thoughts on where WHO will go? If I have to take bets, my favourites are, in order: Fridays at 9pm; Thursdays at 8pm; Wednesdays at 9pm. Don't be surprised if one of those is where the show turns up in January...

Report by Eric Szulczewski

An American SF Glut?
See page seven...

briefly...

•UK GOLD have responded to viewers' (and DWB's!) criticisms and will show DOCTOR WHO in broadcast order - as opposed to production order - from *Castrovalva*. The schedule into July is: (June) 16-21st - *Castrovalva*; 22-27th - *Four to Doomsday*; 28-1st (July) - *Kinda*; 4-7th - *The Visitation*; 8-11th - *Black Orchid*; 12-15th - *Earthshock*; 18-21st - *Time-Flight*.

•MARVEL UK is reprinting the complete Sixties' *The Dalek Chronicles* under one cover on August 4. With a specially commissioned wraparound cover painted by the original TV21 strip illustrator, Ron Turner, it will comprise 108 pages in full colour and cost £3.99.

This Year's Winter Special will be an overdue Robert Holmes tribute, featuring archives on *The Carnival of Monsters* and *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*...

•EDITING of November's ninety-minute video, now titled MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS IN THE TARDIS, began on June 13, with completion on August 15...

•IN A WEEK that saw *Children's Pre-School Favourites* at number one in the Gallup video charts, *Inferno* entered at seven with *Ghost Light* at nine...

•WHILST not meeting Enterprises' sales expectations, the Dalek and TARDIS box sets were nonetheless the bestsellers of the DOCTOR WHO video range last year, the former in pole position. The best-selling conventional release was *The Silurians*, hotly followed by *Resurrection of the Daleks*, *Terror of the Autons*, *The Keeper of Traken*, *The Curse of Peladon*, *The Two Doctors*, *Vengeance on Varos* and *Image of the Fendahl*. All tapes each sold in excess of 20,000 copies... (*CT*)

•THE FIVE DOCTORS is being issued on Laserdisc in America on August 29, only the second WHO story to do so there (although *Day of the Daleks* is now deleted). It will retail at $39.95, and sell in Britain from specialist dealers at £40...

•CONTRARY to rumour, there are no plans just now to issue the Dalek movies on Laserdisc in wide-screen format...

•JON PERTWEE has been in Prague recently filming an episode of Spielberg's THE YOUNG INDIANA JONES CHRONICLES

•TOM BAKER has invited polite criticism from his colleagues on the third series of MEDICS (airing on ITV in July), who have accused him of disrupting filming. Actor James Gaddas said: "He kept telling everyone these fascinating stories. We were all captivated but just couldn't get any work done. He's mad as a hatter - but great fun"...

•ROYAL DOULTON are launching a series of eight inch porcelain DOCTOR WHO figures, commencing with Tom Baker, at around £90-100. A provisional release date is set for July, so keep an eye on the Sunday supplements...

•ALTERNATIVE SOFTWARE's next foray into DOCTOR WHO will be a Cyberman role-playing game...

•BELLFRUIT MANUFACTURING are to launch a DOCTOR WHO fruit machine. Soon to be seen in pubs and clubs, it will be available to collectors for £2000...

•RADIO TWO erred in its repeat of *Paradise of Death* by transmitting episode four two weeks in a row...

•RADIO FOUR, in its new Saturday morning children's nostalgia series WHATEVER HAPPENED TO..?, will be considering Susan Foreman in a July edition, which will reveal - among several other contentious claims - that she was committed to an institution in Barking and later became a Civil Service typist...

•WHOVIANS for McCoy & Aldred is a pressure group campaigning for Amblin to retain the services of Ace and the 7th Doctor. You can register your support at: 402 South 6th Street, Lafayette, IN 47901, USA...

•HAPPY BIRTHDAY Prydonian Renegades! The New Jersey club celebrated its tenth anniversary in May, making it one of the most successful fan chapters in the States.

ARTISTS IN A TIZZ OVER 'EIGHT-POINT-STAR THINGY'

MAJOR UPHEAVALS have occurred over who paints the BBC's DOCTOR WHO video sleeves as Pete Wallbank makes way for the return of Andrew Skilleter, who is currently working on The *Rescue/The Romans* for release this Autumn.

Wallbank - whose final contribution to the range is July's *The Visitation/Black Orchid*, apparently fell foul of the department due to several undisclosed factors.

One possible reason for BBC Video's apparent dissatisfaction with his work is attributed to a complaint recently made by Alister Pearson, whose "eight-point-star thingy" - which he designed specially for his *Arc of Infinity* book reprint commission - mysteriously reappeared on the subsequent video release of the Davison yarn... painted by Wallbank!

This prompted several purchasers of the tape - who had scanned the backdrops of Gallifrey and Amsterdam in vain for sight of the design - to write in to BBC Video, accusing them of going back to their old ways of gratuitous editing.

Pearson elaborated on the reasons for his design: "It has no significance at all. It's merely a compositional device to separate the Matrix section of the background from the main bit of the background."

On being quizzed about his uncannily coincidental idea for his own artwork, and whether or not it had any bearing on the televised story, Wallbank reportedly told DOCTOR WHO Magazine: "No, no, nothing like that. It was on the book cover, I liked it so I used it"!

-VIRGIN have commissioned a second Sixth Doctor MISSING ADVENTURE for March next year. *Time of Your Life*, by Steve Lyons, is set in the period between Peri and Mel. To Follow in April will be the initial second Doctor entry, provisionally titled *The Phantom Dreamers* by Gary Russell. It will be a Ben and Polly story occurring between *The Power of the Daleks* and *The Highlanders*. *Original Sin* by Andy Lane will be the debut NEW ADVENTURE for new companions Chris and Roslyn, out in June 1995. *Parasite* and *Falls the Shadow* have switched places and will now be released December and November respectively.

With Eric Saward continuing to stall over his contracted novelisations *Resurrection* and *Revelation of the Daleks* and *Return of the Autons*, these are now scheduled for 1995, and the *Discontinuity Guide* is now due next May.

Above: *The Crystal Bucephalus* (November), and *Venusian Lullaby* (December).

Virgin's October offerings: *The Seventies*, from the Howe-Stammers-Walker stable, and *St. Anthony's Fire* by Mark Gatiss.

Coming Soon...

June

(Note: Release dates for all STAR TREK tapes remain liable to change...)

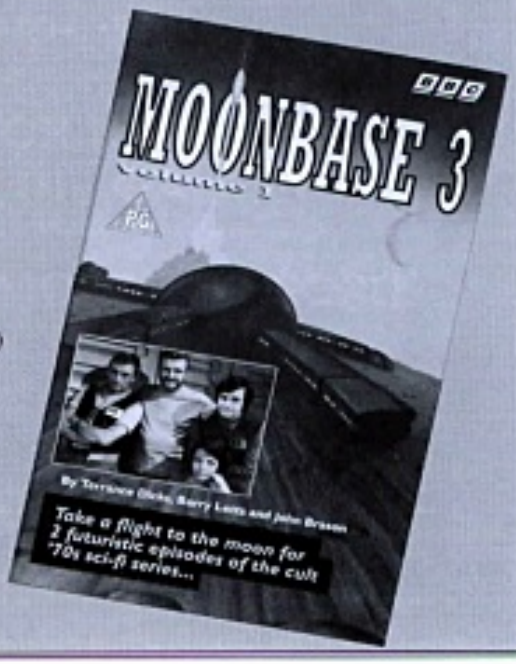
27th **QUANTUM LEAP** - Pilot episode (video)
27th **QUANTUM LEAP** - *Star Crossed/The Right Hand of God* (video -uncertain)
27th **DEEP SPACE NINE** - *Rivals/The Alternate* (video)
27th **THE NEXT GENERATION** - *Parallels/The Pegasus* (video)
27th **THE AVENGERS** - *The Masterminds/The Winged Avenger* (video)
27th **THE AVENGERS** - *The Curious Case of the Countless Clues/Invasion of the Earthmen* (video)
30th ***All I Really Need to Know I Learned from watching STAR TREK*** (Dave Marinaccio)

July

SPACE 1999 - *Dorzac/Devil's Planet* (video)
4th **DOCTOR WHO** - *Destiny of the Daleks* (video)
4th **DOCTOR WHO** - *The Visitation/Black Orchid* (video)
4th **THE TRIPODS** - Volume Four (video)
4th **THE NEXT GENERATION** - *Q-Squared* (Peter David - hardback)
4th **STAR TREK** - *Shadows on the Sun* (Michael Jan Friedman - paperback)
4th **RED DWARF V** - *Holoship* (video)
4th(?) BLAKE'S 7 - Video tape price cut - £7.99
7th ***DOCTOR WHO MAGAZINE 215***
11th **THE NEXT GENERATION** - *Force of Nature/Inheritance* (video)
11th **DEEP SPACE NINE** - *Second Sight/Sanctuary* (video)
14th ***DOCTOR WHO SUMMER SPECIAL*** - *£2.99*
14th **DOCTOR WHO - THE SCRIPTS:** *Galaxy Four* (William Emms)
18th **MOONBASE 3** - *Achille's Heel/Outsiders* (video)
21st **THE NEW ADVENTURES** - *Blood Harvest* (Terrance Dicks)
21st **THE MISSING ADVENTURES** - *Goth Opera* (Paul Cornell)
21st ***DOCTOR WHO Classic Comics 23***
25th **THE NEW AVENGERS** - Tape Five (video)
25th **DEEP SPACE NINE** - *Armageddon Game/Whispers* (video)
25th **THE NEXT GENERATION** - *Homeward/Sub Rosa* (video)
29th ***DOCTOR WHO YEAR BOOK*** - *£4.50*

August

THE NEW AVENGERS Tape Six (video)
1st **DOCTOR WHO** - *The Seeds of Doom* (video)
1st **THE NEXT GENERATION** - *Foreign Foes* (David Galanter)
1st **STARFLEET ACADEMY** - *Atlantis Station* (VE Mitchell)
4th ***DOCTOR WHO Magazine 216***
8th(?) **THE NEXT GENERATION** - *Lower Decks/Thine Own Self* (video)
8th(?) **DEEP SPACE NINE** - *Paradise/Shadowplay* (video)
18th **THE NEW ADVENTURES** - *Strange England* (Simon Messingham)
18th ***DOCTOR WHO Classic Comics 24***
25th STAR TREK - *Planet of Judgement* (Joe Haldeman)
25th THE AVENGERS - *Deadline* (Patrick Macnee)


BBC
MOONBASE 3
PG
By Terrance Dicks, Barry Letts and John Brason
Take a flight to the moon for 2 futuristic episodes of the cult '70s sci-fi series...

Generations filming nears its end...

Trouble at DS9 and VOYAGER

THE DIRECTOR and crew of *STAR TREK: Generations* is breathing a sigh of relief as location shooting for the film draws to a close. No one was sure how well William Shatner and Patrick Stewart would get along as they worked on the sequences that will constitute the concluding action of the film due next November.

Many location shots had been cut from the film's lean budget but the two Captains were briefly joined by Jimmy Doohan and Walter Koenig as the original series trio filmed scenes which will open the film - showing Scotty and Checkov trying to persuade their retired Captain to attend the christening ceremonies for the new Enterprise-B. Going out in true Kirk macho style, they find him risking life and limb indulging in 'orbital' skydiving complete with jet thrusters and reentry suit.

The rest of the outdoor action was strictly Patty and Billy, as director David Carson took to calling them, as Picard must pursue a disinterested Kirk as he relives memories of former happy times on Earth that are brought to vivid reality in the Nexus. The 23rd century Captain is unaware that he has been declared dead for 80 years and is unwilling to go off to save the galaxy one more time with this stranger. At least for two weeks the two stars appeared to strike up a warm working relationship despite slighting references Shatner has been known to make in the past concerning the lack of strong leadership exhibited on the new Enterprise. Of course, it is well known now that Shatner's perception that the Captain was always the focus of STAR TREK has contributed to strained relationships with many of his fellow actors.

One element in making the two actors click was that both proved to be proficient horsemen for a riding sequence. Of course, the tales that will be told about these two weeks hereafter remains to be seen.

Paramount Pictures is currently unhappy with Patrick Stewart because he expects not to be available for extensive promotional work next Autumn on behalf of the film — but they can hardly be surprised by that. Stewart has been planning on being on the London stage at that time for nearly a year. He is co-producing and starring in a production of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* in the West End which should open in October or November for an anticipated four or five month run before possibly moving to New York.

His NEXT GENERATION co-stars should be much more readily available but are still expressing some resentments over the cancellation of their highly rated television series in exchange for very small roles for most of them in the film. However, a concerted effort seems to be underway to be more upbeat in public comments about the script and the entire television cast has been thrilled by the look of the footage that Carson is putting together with cinematographer John Alonzo. The old bridge set was extensively upgraded to lay in more detail for the movie scenes.

If trauma has subsided on the film set, new controversies loom on the television STAR TREK frontier. *Variety* reported that producer Rick Berman had decided he wants Lindsey Wagner to be the captain on the new VOYAGER series but that Paramount executives were insisting that a male lead be selected. More recent rumours insist that Kirstie Alley had been offered the role. She is best known now for her years on the hit comedy *Cheers*, but she was, of course, the original Saavik in *Star Trek II* — and expressed unhappiness when the film producers were unwilling to meet her salary demands for *Star Trek III* and recast the part with Robin Curtis.

DS9 writers replaced...

TURMOIL has also struck the writing staff once again as Ira Steven Behr has been placed in charge of DEEP SPACE NINE as Berman and Michael Piller move on to supervise the start of the new series. One of Behr's first acts was to dump Peter Allan Fields and James Crocker from the staff - ostensibly to make way for Brannon Braga and Ronald Moore to move over from THE NEXT GENERATION. Fields, who has been responsible for some of the best DS9 and TNG scripts of the last several seasons, was especially stung by reports that he was ditched for poor writing. The truth seems to be that there was a friction between he and Behr that came home to roost. DS9 fans are braced for time paradoxes and technobabble eruptions.

Kathleen Toth

UNEXPECTED CHANGES AS BABYLON 5 IS RENEWED

BABYLON5 has upheavals of its own as Creator/Producer Joseph Straczynski announced that Warners had given him approval for a second season - and shortly thereafter stunned fans of the series by revealing that Michael O'Hare will be leaving the show.

O'Hare, in the role of station commander Jeff Sinclair, had appeared to be the focal point of the story which Straczynski has always insisted is already mapped out over a five year arc. No specific reasons for the departure were given - only that they found themselves arriving mutually at an amicable parting of the ways. The part will not be recast. Instead, O'Hare is to appear in the first two episodes of the second season to provide some sort of resolution to the 'hole in your mind' storyline involving Sinclair. Straczynski maintains that his overall story plan will only be slightly deflected by the change as he had always had 'trapdoors' built into his plot to allow for removal of characters.

briefly...

•UK GOLD began its weekly transmissions of all 52 episodes of BLAKE'S 7 from June 4 at 6pm on Saturdays — the slot left vacant by the recently completed SURVIVORS — with each episode repeated at midday on Sundays following the DOCTOR WHO omnibus. Fears are increasing that the acquisition has prompted BBC2 to abandon its plans to repeat the series, which has not been seen on terrestrial television in over a decade. Marvel have now delayed publication of the BLAKE'S 7 Summer Special until the winter in the hope of an eleventh hour reprieve...

•DOOMWATCH has been acquired by UK Gold, who will commence transmission of all surviving episodes, from June 25, in the Saturday 11pm slot. The station is also hoping to show THE TRIPODS soon (which should please those who have just bought season one on video), and the 10-part, 1975 BBC serial similar to SURVIVORS but aimed at children, CHANGES...

•BBC VIDEO has speeded up the release of the MOONBASE 3 trilogy of tapes to one a month, commencing July...

•ALTHOUGH Virgin recalled all copies of *THE AVENGERS Programme Guide* for pulping (see DWB127) within days of its release, an unknown number of copies were sold from various branches of W.H.Smith before they were withdrawn. Expect the collector's price to soar before too long...

•BOXTREE are accelerating their rate of telefantasy publications. *QUANTUM LEAP: Prelude* and novel seven in the paperback series are due the end of August, while September sees *Captain's Log Supplement: Season Seven* and a factual title, *Law of TREK*. Virgin are reportedly engaged in a war of words with the company over their scheduled WHO books (more on this next issue)...

•PHILIP SCHOFIELD will be talking to well-known celebrities about their passion for various telefantasy series - including DOCTOR WHO, THUNDERBIRDS and STAR TREK - for an as yet untitled ITV programme to go out June 26.

BARRETT LYNCHES UNAUTHORISED GENE RODDENBERRY BIOGRAPHER

THE US TV GUIDE recently carried an interview with Majel Barrett in which she vented her wrath at Joel Engels, the author of the new and (very) unauthorised tell-all biography on her late husband (*Gene Roddenberry: The Myth and the Man Behind Star Trek*).

"Apparently the best way for inadequate talent to achieve recognition is by being negative", she scorned. She also lays into many of Roddenberry's former colleagues who help to paint him as a 'sexually insatiable, widely disliked glory hog who overhyped his "vision" while burying the contributions of those who made it a reality'. "I was rather shocked to see some of them [quoted in the book] because all during Gene's lifetime they were calling him 'friend, friend, friend'. And then to hear the venom that comes after he's gone! It just shows you who the ass-kissers were."

She further describes Engel - who penned a similarly shady biography on TWILIGHT ZONE maestro Rod Serling - as "one of those people who'd accuse Santa Claus of abusing children." Clearly distressed by the book's tone as much as its detail, she added: "Even if some things in the book are true - even if *everything* in the book is true - it should never have [been written]. Gene instilled a hope and a brightness in people. He gave us reason to look forward to the future and he did it with a great deal of love and energy - so leave it alone!"

Meanwhile, Majel is in discussions with Simon & Schuster to pen her own TREK memoirs. "Unlike a few people", she asserted, "I was there for every minute of it."

***•SPEAKING at a meeting of the** Space Congress in Florida at the beginning of May, Majel Barrett revealed that her late husband's ashes were aboard the space shuttle Columbia which orbited the Earth in October 1992, a year after Gene Roddenberry's death. Finally fulfilling his lifelong desire to soar among the stars - Roddenberry was often described as The Great Bird of the Galaxy - his ashes*

travelled courtesy of mission commander James Wetherbee who, while not a Trekker himself, said he was "honoured to be asked" when he met Majel on a NASA tour... (Newsweek)

***•MAJEL has joined forces with** vintage TREK writer, Dorothy "D.C." Fontana to create a universe around the character of 'Ranger' - a heroic DNA clone devised by Roddenberry in the early '70s but never fully developed...*

AN AMERICAN SF GLUT?

CAN THERE BE such a thing as *too much* science fiction? That may be the case in the United States. In addition to the sparsely-carried Sci-Fi Channel on cable, with series such as QUANTUM LEAP, ALIEN NATION and AMAZING STORIES, the networks and the first-run syndication market provide a cornucopia of science fiction and fantasy. But how much is too much?

The recent departure of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION provided a huge amount of media attention, enough for TV Guide - the US' best-selling magazine - to begin a weekly science fiction/fantasy column by Glenn Kenny. Each week, TV Guide provides a view on a different series or star from the SF/fantasy milieu. The issue of 4-10 June, for instance, has an article focusing on HIGHLANDER. It has taken time, but American telefantasy has gained a great deal of respect.

Not counting cartoons (a fertile field with imported Japanese *anime* series), Sci-Fi Channel material or some syndicated repeats, here are some of the series that Americans can choose from for their weekly viewing....

•STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION (syndicated): Reruns will be broadcast in some markets until the turn of the millennium, and probably for much longer. It's now a legend, both as science fiction and as the series that proved that first-run syndication can be lucrative.

•STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE (syndicated): Ratings and quality are moving up as finicky TREK audiences are becoming comfortable with the characters, as are the writers at the production office. The recent resolution of the year-long Kai plotline will give Louise Fletcher and Philip Anglim more screen appearances as Winn and Bariel, as the writers seem to want to explore Bajor more in the future.

•BABYLON 5 (syndicated): A second full season is being filmed, with many fans hoping that a NEXT GEN-style improvement is on the way. The characters are starting to emerge, but the writing staff seems to have problems with the large cast.

•TIME TRAX (syndicated): This year's victims in the SF wars are Darien Lambert and his computer Selma, cancelled after two series which (according to fan polls) never managed to match the pilot episode.

•HIGHLANDER (syndicated): The adaptation of the popular film series has expanded the mythos of the Immortals, and is proving popular with its mixture of fantasy and real settings.

•ROBOCOP (syndicated): Another film adaptation, the series has redeemed the low quality of the last two movies. Growing rapidly in popularity.

•SEAQUEST DSV (NBC): A surprise renewal, NBC is hoping that Steven Spielberg can inject some more of his magic into the floundering undersea adventure. Expect the Darwin action figure soon.

•LOIS AND CLARK (ABC): Another surprise renewal. With Superman's increase in comics popularity with each coming month, improved audiences are expected for next season.

•THE AVENGERS (A&E): Currently broadcasting Tara King stories.

•THE X FILES (FOX): Low ratings, but surprisingly good reviews and demographics has kept the SF/horror series alive.

•THE TOMORROW PEOPLE (Nickelodeon): The latest series attracted some attention, but not much audience in its early Saturday evening slot. Another set of episodes will almost certainly be made.

•TEK (syndicated): Movie adaptations of William Shatner's (or is it Ron Goulart's?) SF novels about former police detective Jake Cardigan have garnered good ratings, with a possible regular series on the horizon.

•MIGHTY MORPHIN' POWER RANGERS (Fox): This mixture of bad Japanese TV show footage (with its requisite bad monsters) and new American scenes featuring teenage superhero ninjas would not rate a mention except that it happens to be the marketing sensation of the '90s, with parents lining up for hours for action figures, and in some markets is watched by 99% of all children 2-11 years old. Frightening.

•MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000 (Comedy Central): Not really SF, but the series featuring a regular guy and his two robots trapped aboard a satellite and forced to watch bad movies (while wisecracking up to 700 times per two-hour episode), many of which are SF/horror, is one of the biggest cult successes on TV. Since TV Guide's SF/fantasy column has featured the show twice, it gets included in this list.

Also, depending on which market a viewer is in, he or she could have BLAKE'S 7, RED DWARF, SURVIVORS, and/or DOCTOR WHO on the viewing schedule.

...with more already on the way in the form of STAR TREK: VOYAGER, M.A.N.T.I.S. (confirmed as a series after a pilot movie starring Carl Lumbly), Gerry Anderson's Space Police series PRECINCT 88, and Spielberg's EARTH 2. The latter is to lead into SEAQUEST DSV, but up against 60 MINUTES it will be preempted or delayed by football telecasts frequently. Don't blink...

The question now becomes exactly how much the American market can take. Trends tend to be established quickly and tend to die even quicker - perhaps even before DOCTOR WHO's expected debut early next year. The mini-SF boom of '93 produced no real winners, and while the trend started by ROSEANNE of having stand-up comics star in shows based on their acts is still going on, it has produced only two hit shows, both produced by former ROSEANNE producer Matt Williams: HOME IMPROVEMENT and GRACE UNDER FIRE. How much science fiction is too much? If you're a fan, the answer is, of course, "There's no such thing as too much". But if you're a network programmer, and you see corpses littering the landscape...

Report by Eric Szulczewski

RAIDERS of the LOST ARCHIVES 2

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Saga of the 'Kiwi tapes'

Paul Lee
York

I have read with considerable interest over the last months the debate for and against TVNZ's alleged archive holdings, and I would like to present the following facts:

On a recent holiday to New Zealand I spoke to Philip Rodgers, the Chief Archivist at TVNZ's broadcasting archive at Avalon in Wellington. Philip was actually present in 1984 when the telex message came in from the BBC requesting the return of all their old material. A thorough search was made, but all that was found was an old edition of HANCOCK'S HALF HOUR (which was actually missing at the time), and a few episodes of DOCTOR WHO. Philip couldn't be specific about episode titles, but he was sure that they were *not* "missing".

As for the possibility of lost episodes currently being held by TVNZ, Mr.Rodgers politely discounted this idea. Like the BBC Film and Videotape Library, TVNZ is currently transferring all it's 2 inch video and film stock (but only to 1 inch tape, not D3 like the BBC), a task they have very nearly finished. Mr.Rodgers assured me that should any non-TVNZ material be found, they always contact the original distributor to see if they want the programmes back. A recent case in point was the discovery of film prints of the Sixties' US spy spoof series GET SMART!. The distributors were contacted and they were asked if they wanted the film reels back. They declined saying that since they only deal with 1 inch tape (not film anymore) they wouldn't be of use, and the films were slung out as they were redundant.

Philip suggested that we contact Fred Gapes, the current Programme Traffic Manager in Auckland, because, since DOCTOR WHO was not a New Zealand tv programme, it would be best to deal with someone who had information about incoming and outgoing material, as opposed to domestically-made programmes. Fred, who has worked at TVNZ for 20 years, remembers DOCTOR WHO very distinctly, and was sure that some of the episodes went on to Singapore after TVNZ broadcast them - so New Zealand wasn't 'the end of the line' after all! He recalled that records describing what episodes were returned to the BBC, which were destroyed and which were cycled on were, for the most part, destroyed in a fire at TVNZ circa.1972! But he did remember that they received *The Daleks' Master Plan* which they sent back to England for a variety of reasons (they deemed it to be too violent, over-long and incomplete - part 7 was, of course, absent!).

At the time of writing, Fred is checking the fragmentary records that they do have and a reply is expected soon, although we do know that *Marco Polo* went on to Iran and the recovered episodes of *The Time Meddler* and *The War Machines* found in Nigeria in 1984 originated from New Zealand.

Coincidentally, I should mention here that at the Missing - Believed Wiped event last year, I sat next to a gentleman who has written to TVNZ about A FOR ANDROMEDA. He was informed that the prints had been cycled on to a TV station in Pakistan, but that no-one could recall exactly which station (although there couldn't have been *that* many in the early 1960s)!

Hopes for the recovery of missing episodes of DOCTOR WHO were high late last year when research by James and Sean Clark in New Zealand revealed the existence of film and VT depositories that were dotted all over the country in the 1960s and 1970s. Probably due to the huge amount of material that TVNZ actually possessed at the time, the film/VT was stored locally in one of the four broadcast centres (Dunedin, Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch) in places as diverse as town halls and schools' basements and attics! The material would then be either cycled onto the next broadcast centre or, in some case, forgotten about.

So, for a time, it looked as if one of these depositories *might* have something — until it was discovered that TVNZ recalled all material to Avalon in the early-to-mid part of the 1980s! (In one of the rare coincidences that makes this kind of research worthwhile, I discovered that James' and Sean's father was a technician at the BBC in 1964, and he told me a few interesting stories about the making of *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*. He was asked to 'become' a Dalek for the famous 'Daleks on Westminster Bridge' picture: he's the third Dalek from the front....).

As for the so-called VZ2000 video format that sparked off this whole matter last year in DWB's letters pages; well, no-one has produced a single scrap of evidence that such a format *ever* existed!

One last point: the 1985 newspaper clipping that Peter Kaybe (DWB126) provided was of considerable interest to me, because it describes perfectly the situation, not in New Zealand but in *Canada*, where a storehouse full of uncatalogued television programmes resides. Due to staff and resource shortages (plus a total lack of interest), CBC are not prepared to answer any letters about this Toronto storage facility, nor are they prepared to let anyone gain access. Perhaps Canada should be the next target for the hunt for missing episodes?

If nothing else, all this proves is that we can definitely cross New Zealand off our lists — unless there are film collectors Down Under who know differently.....

Peter Brierley
Melbourne, Australia

Richard Develyn's reply (DWB125) to Nigel Windsor's letter in DWB124 echoed my sentiments exactly. I had heard rumours of possible missing episodes in New Zealand and, in following this up in my original letter (DWB117), I never intended to suggest inefficiency on the part of New Zealand's TV station. But the last thing I want to see is missing episodes destroyed just because their survival reflects badly on the TV station which holds out of date material. In fact, I hope that other TV stations around the world aren't as efficient as TVNZ is in this respect!

But to bring everybody up to date, I have had contact with other amateur searchers in New Zealand and to date have had no success in finding any missing episodes.

Some points for the record

N.T. Parkes
Stourbridge

Further to the recent one day DOCTOR WHO convention held at Aylesbury it has been brought to my attention that various rumours are circulating regarding the theft of a Dalek whilst in my possession. Therefore I should like to put forward the facts.

Firstly, I am an avid Dalek enthusiast owning two of my own which I have built and rebuilt over a number of years. I became involved with the organisers of the Birmingham DOCTOR WHO festival when I was approached by them regarding the loan of my Daleks. I further became involved in the return of various props to London both for the BBC as well as for two other people who had loaned items to the exhibition organisers when apparently the arrangements between the organisers and the Council (who had collected the items originally) went astray.

On the 18th December I arranged a vehicle and proceeded to deliver the items myself. I advised the three parties concerned of the delivery arrangements and was then told by the person in charge of the storage of the BBC items that delivery was not convenient, despite the vehicle being loaded and within a 25-30 mile radius of the stores. The reason for this has been explained to me although I feel that the items could still have been unloaded with a minimum amount of disruption, but that is academic now. As it was I delivered the remaining props and returned to the Midlands with the BBC items.

Following discussions during early January with Mr. Lorne Martin, a date was discussed and agreed upon for the re-delivery of the BBC items — 23rd January 1994. Once again I personally arranged another vehicle and loaded it on the Friday evening to enable an early start.

I had been out on the evening of the 22nd and upon my return in the early hours of the 23rd I saw that the van containing the BBC props had been broken into. I could see that the Dalek was missing and, although not damaged, part of the Special Weapons Dalek was on the floor at the rear of the van. There was also substantial damage to the van. The break-in was immediately reported to the local Police, who it must be said were a little sceptical to say the least. I personally spent two hours searching the local streets between 2 - 4am that morning with no luck.

After delivering the remaining props to the store used by the BBC, I advised both Mr Martin and also the organisers of the exhibition of the theft. Furthermore I spent most of the following week getting the news into the press to try and make it as hard as possible to move the Dalek about. It would be very easy to "what if" or "if only", but this proves nothing and achieves nothing. However I'd like to make a number of points:

Firstly, I agreed to be involved in transporting the props as a favour to the exhibition organisers as well as to the two independent DOCTOR WHO fans who had also loaned items. Secondly, one of my own Daleks suffered substantial damage whilst in the care of the exhibition organisers/ Birmingham museum. Thirdly, two other items have gone missing from the museum itself, these being an *Earthshock* Cyber gun and a *Revenge* Cyberman head, both items belonging to Derek Handley. Fourthly, both the BBC and Mr. Martin have been kept advised of the situation, including the reported sightings of the Dalek following the theft. Finally,a number of people knew of my address following a local press item which also included a photograph of the Daleks to publicise the exhibition itself. A smaller number of people were aware of the weekend arrangements prior to the re-delivery of the items as I had kept the exhibition organisers informed of the events surrounding the movement of the props.

On a personal note I feel saddened that a programme I once watched and enjoyed can attract these sort of problems, and the thought that DOCTOR WHO "fans" are at all involved would herald a very sad day for fandom. Naturally I would appeal to anyone who knows anything to come forward to either the police or to yourselves at DWB.

Spielberg 'disastrous' for Who

Henry Rollins
Orpington

If indeed Spielberg has got DOCTOR WHO, I can't think of anything more potentially destructive for the show. Spielberg's movies have always been singed with fantasy so one doesn't have to look far to get some idea of what an Americanised DOCTOR WHO would be like. Why don't they just accept that there's some TV we do well and there's some TV they do well and just adapt their own version. DOCTOR WHO characterised itself by being a British institution. With the public's indifference now to DOCTOR WHO it's very easy to forget that at one time DOCTOR WHO used to get 14 million viewers. It's never been that big in America — DOCTOR WHO was just shown on select cable networks late at night whose only viewers were the diehard fans. Don't get seduced by all this talk of DOCTOR WHO being big in America. Spielberg will soon realise his folly when he airs it on American television to an indifferent public.

Darren Powis
Cwmbran

The reaction from some quarters of fandom to the new Spellberg-produced series of WHO has been astonishing. You would never believe that they're talking about a programme that has been out of production for nearly five years. What do they hope to achieve? To keep WHO off our screens for even longer? They should remember that if it wasn't for American support, WHO wouldn't have lasted anywhere near its first 26 years.

I was angered by the demands that WHO should be an "English only" club, and would like to point out that the programme is also seen in Wales, Scotland and Ireland (for overseas readers they are the countries that ignorant people lump together under the title "England"). The complainers also seem to forget that, a) DOCTOR WHO was created by a *Canadian*, b) the first episode was written by an *Australian*, and, c) the Daleks were the creation of a *Welshman*!

In short, J Gorman & Co, please stop being so narrow-minded and give the new series a chance before shooting it down.

Daniel O'Dwyer
8 Ellison Street
North Blackburn 3130
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

I feel I must point out to John Connors and Niall Turner that John Gorman is not some elder statesman or raving 'fanboy'. I believe Mr. Gorman's fan charter is a basic guideline as to which good ideas make good DOCTOR WHO stories. If Ambin can keep this in mind then their version may be as good as the BBC series. The charter is not some 'Bring back Hartnell and black & white' campaign.

Avengers Guide Appreciated

James Watson
Newbury

I was interested to read your story 'Avengers Guide Pulped' (DWB127) as I managed to buy a copy in the Reading W.H. Smiths in March. Did they all get pulped? I think not!

I certainly didn't spot anything libellous (though I'm not a lawyer) and found the guide quite enjoyable (especially the quirky sub-headings, such as 'kinkiness factor', 'champagne', etc). I find it sad that Virgin has decided not to release a book into which has gone such obvious work. Well, I guess that I (and the lucky buyers who got the few others on the shelf) now have a great collectors' item. Any takers?

A. Reader
Aberdeen

Having just finished *All-Consuming Fire*, how about teaming the Doctor up with Mrs. Marple, John Steed, James Bond or George and Mildred? The possibilities are endless, and would probably be more fun than the continuity-laden clunkers set in the '70s!

Classifieds

Classifieds — £3.95 for up to 45 words (10p per additional word).

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CULT TV Weekend. 11-14 November 1994, Hemsby, Norfolk. A celebration of all television with a fan following. Guests (subject to commitments) include Harlan Ellison, Sylvia Anderson, Barry Morse, Annette Andre, Sophie Aldred, Deborah Watling. Screenings, discussions, theme parties. SAE: P.O. Box 1701, Peterborough PE1 IEX.

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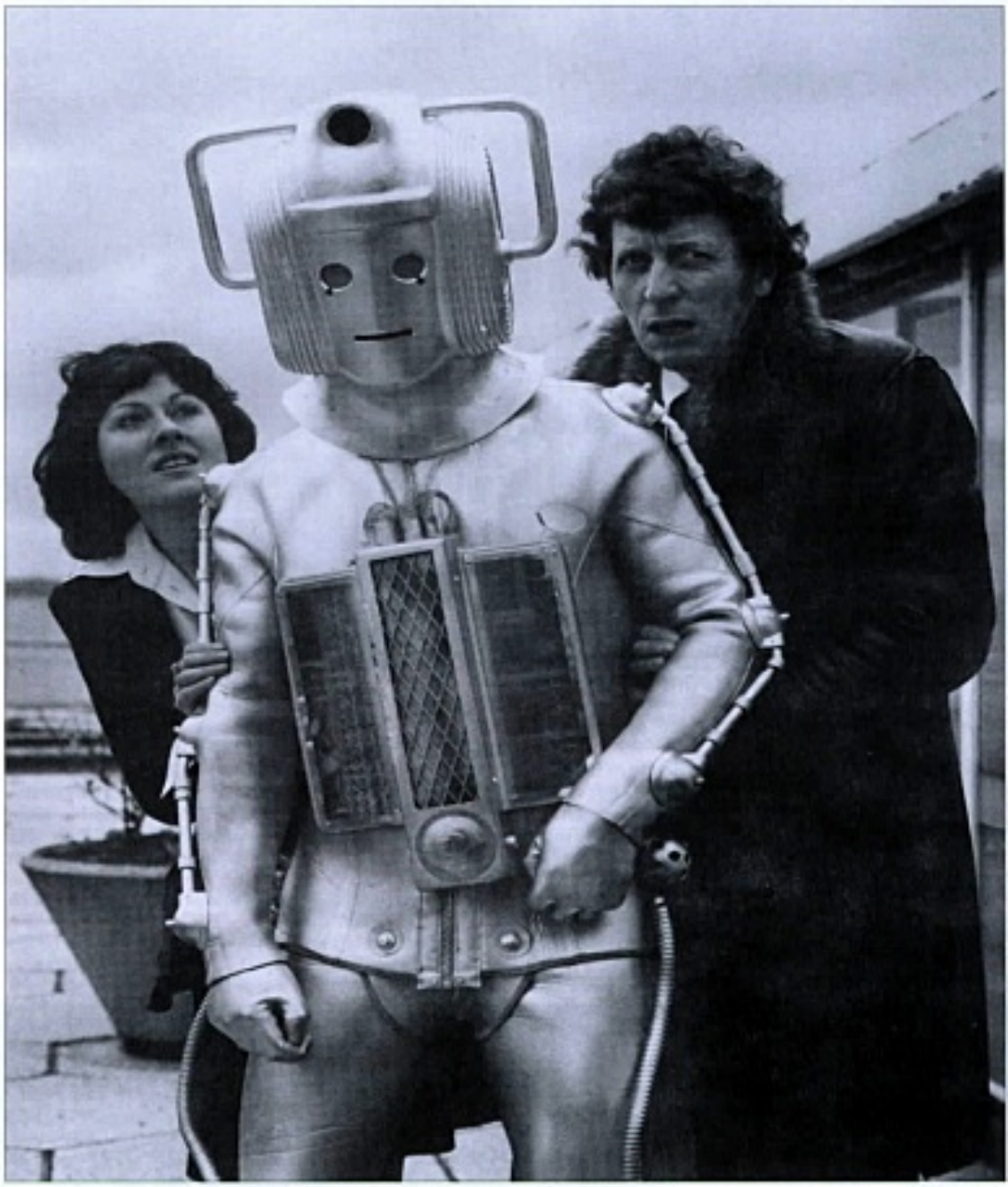
COOEEE, Lord Nimon!!! Sonic Screwdriver issue three is out now! The Williams era special with reviews, the 12th Doctor strip, Carry On Doctor exclusive and, of course, the Nimon! Essential reading for all weakling scum! £1.50 from Steven Grace, 83 Stanley Gradens, Herne Bay CT6 5SQ.

DOCTOR WALOC. New fanzine covering TV, film, video, computer games, music, books and radio (plus silliness and fiction). Send £1 (£1.50 overseas) to: Darren, 38 Camrose Walk, Cwmbran NP44 4NN, Wales. Contributions wanted (but please read the zine first). Go on, give it a walocking!



The Beginning: 15th February '74 — Liz Sladen and a mechanical friend introduce the new Doctor to the press (©Hulton Deutsch)

"ODD, ISN'T IT?"

It is exactly twenty years since Tom Baker donned floppy hat and scarf for his first adventure as the Doctor. On the eve of his sixtieth birthday last January — at the PanoptiCon convention at the Novotel, Hammersmith — he spoke to CBS/Fox Video about his WHO memories and his offbeat outlook on life, the Universe and everything...

WHY did you accept the role of the Doctor?
Well, there were several reasons. The first was that I was very short of identity, which is what actors suffer from when they are out of work. The next reason was that it was paying good money and it was a very famous part, but mostly I was in search of an identity. I was working on a building site, making tea for people and generally being a slave, a 'victim'. I think to be an actor you have got to want to be a victim. Desperately wanting to be an actor is rather like being desperately ill — it's irreversible.

It strikes me that it's a kind of expression of inadequacy. The less personality you have the more useful it is because, in a sense, you can take on other personalities. If you are convinced about who you are, what you want and how you perceive the world and relationships, then why would you want to be an actor? If you are not certain about any of these things, and if you can't sing or dance or play an instrument — in other words, totally unemployable — then the thing to do is to be an actor. When they examine people from lunatic asylums (or whatever they call those places nowadays) who are going for jobs, if they say 'There's nothing I can do', they tell them to 'Be an actor, go to America'! You can be sensationally inadequate, as long as you're inadequate in an interesting sort of way, but I could be wrong (I often am).

How do you think the way you portrayed the Doctor differed to the way it had been played before?
Well, I didn't know much about how anybody played it before, I mean, I had caught glimpses of it. It was always on a Saturday night when I was going to the pub or something like that, but it always struck me as a jolly part. When it came up I had no idea how to play it at all. I didn't, of course, mention this to the BBC until I'd signed the contract, and then they said, rather confidentially, 'How are you going to play it?' and I said 'I don't know'. They all fell about and said 'Isn't he a wag!' But I didn't know, and I think it would have been a mistake for me to have tried.

All I had to concentrate on was being an alien. It was important to play the alien quality of the character as I have always felt alienated. Nearly everything alienates me (I've started on my autobiography, which I've titled *All Things Betrayed*). When I look back at my life I find that I have betrayed everyone that I have ever come into contact with, which is probably why I became an actor. It's been hard work and I've been very successful at betrayal. I think it's probably a useful quality for an actor because one is prepared to sacrifice absolutely everything in order to pretend that things are fine or pretend that things are real. I'm only actually secure when I'm entirely fictional. Odd.

Did you develop the character as you were going along, or did you plan it in advance?
No. What I did was just respond to it plus this natural feeling of alienation I have, but I don't want to suggest that I felt this was an exceptional quality. I just responded to the scripts from the point of view of an alien person, an alien creature who was benevolent. It wasn't difficult for me. I could cope quite well being totally unreal and fictional whereas I couldn't really cope by being real. As the Doctor, I had to pretend that one wasn't fuelled by means or evil thoughts as the character is generous and ungreedy, plus non-violent and asexual. All things I am not.

What are your opinions of the performances of your counterparts, both before and after you?
Well, as I didn't watch it when I was in it it was extremely unlikely that I would watch it when anyone else was in it! Out of curiosity, or sometimes when I was working in other studios, it would be on and I would watch it and I thought they seemed really quite interesting. I sometimes said out loud: 'I would like to have played that part', and then someone would say, 'But you *did* play it'. 'Oh yes, of course I did, yes of course'. No one failed, even I didn't fail. They are all admired by the audience, but I'm quite generous in that way. I mean, I'm not jealous of other actors unless, of course, they are being terribly successful.

I never watched when I was in it, simply because lots of actors do not watch what they do. The reason for this is if you watch what you do, as a modern actor — whether doing film or television — you're always dissatisfied with what you have done because you always wanted to do another take, so what is the point in watching yourself if you are going to be disappointed?

It has been said that the Doctor is a free spirit and is usually smarter than the people he encounters.
All heroes have to, finally, win by ingenuity. One of the difficulties about playing heroes is that they're predictable. Of course they will win so the difficulty about playing one is how do you, within the predictability, be surprising and, dare one say, interesting to the audience? I tried to stress, so far as I can remember, that sometimes my solutions were accidental, because I'm very interested in accidents. I didn't try to pretend to be a great big intellectual, in fact I tried to stress that side of my character which is one endless bluff; pretending to be calm when one is really very nervous. The so-called success that I had on DOCTOR WHO is that there were a large number of people whom identified with the anxieties that I was pretending to be in charge of. In fact I was deeply, deeply frightened. (I hope that is the reason. It couldn't have been the acting.)

Were you involved with the design of your costume? How did it come about?
No, that was just another accident really. Weeks before I even did the first shot (the regeneration scene) Jim Acheson, the costume designer (who is now a double Oscar winner) and I went to various wardrobes; the BBC wardrobes, Nathans, Angels, and places like that. We tried on a huge number of clothes, it was wonderful. The costume gradually emerged as this sort of Edwardian fantasy, slightly bohemian thing. Jim decided that I should have a scarf and so we sent some wool around to a costume maker by the name of Begonia Pope and asked her to knit up a scarf. She had been so impressed to be asked to work for the BBC that when she got the wool she used it all. We went to her house and we could hardly get into her front room — there it was, an immensely long scarf!

Tom Baker & Elisabeth Sladen, 1974 (©Hulton Deutsch)

Jim said let's keep it, so it was just serendipity, a happy accident.

Have you other particularly happy memories of playing the Doctor?

In a sense I came very much to life when I got the part, and to some extent I died in 1980 when I left it. My career certainly died to a large extent. What I remember for several years was that I was a hero in a programme for which there was no competition. There was no formula quite like it and I was at the front of it and known all over the world for a few years. I went to Oman, Saudi Arabia, Amsterdam, Australia and America as a hero. To be actually welcomed as a hero by families was an amazing thing. It doesn't much matter what happens to me now because I just had the greatest experience, which very few people have.

When I was young I wanted to be liked because I was inadequate. When I became more inadequate I wanted to be liked even more, and when I realised that I was totally inadequate I wanted to be loved. Later on, because this is like a drug, I needed to be adored. When I became DOCTOR WHO I felt I was adored, I was welcomed everywhere. I could knock on doors, look through windows or smile at someone on a train and it would produce this ecstasy of welcome. This will never happen to me again and hasn't happened to very many people. There are plenty of people who have had greater success than I have had, have caused more noise, made a lot of money, been more famous and caused more hysteria, but no one I can imagine could have possibly been more welcomed into the heart of a family. There was a kind of instant intimacy where one was trusted in a world where people aren't very trusting because they're frightened. I transcended that, so having been adored is a great memory.

Fortunately I am very much loved at home. This is very difficult for people to understand, I have to elaborate. My wife did a degree in anthropology. If you have any doubts about the person you want to live with, for God's sake get involved with an anthropologist, simply because the older I get the more fascinating my wife finds me! This is a terrifying thing, but it's true. The nearer I approach my tomb, the more raddled and creakier I get, my wife just adores it! I mean, she is always poking, stroking and pinching me and she makes little clucking noises, so it's quite agreeable. So as not to disappoint her I've got my tombstone ready, my will is made and I've got a coffin in the garage. It's full of cat litter because I don't expect to die this season, and if you buy cat litter by the coffin load you get it at a large discount.

When I was the Doctor I had a very favourite assistant played by Lalla Ward. She was also interested in anthropology and she married me as well. That was marvellous. Just the other day I saw Elisabeth Sladen in the street looking wonderful. She knew she was looking wonderful and it gave me a great deal of pleasure to see her. I was always surrounded by very supportive people. They casted very well. We went very much for steady casting rather than trying to sell it on big names. It was a pleasure to go to work, and when I think about those assistants and visiting villains I think about the laughter we sometimes had when rehearsing. I used to look around for the boys from Z CARS or PLAY FOR TODAY or whatever who would be around laughing at us. It was lovely.

Douglas Adams implemented a lighter touch to the proceedings when he took over as script editor.

If you had a better idea on how to say or phrase something during rehearsal, you'd mention it or do it. Douglas Adams was young and not neurotic about these changes or suggestions and would say 'That's fine, put it in'. If the line was any good Douglas would get the credit for it, especially if it was a joke. We are all looking for laughs aren't we? I go to any extreme for a laugh.

What made you decide, after seven seasons, that it was time to move on to do something different?

I began to drag my feet a bit at work and also I found myself becoming very angry and possessive of it. It was difficult to accept what producers or directors were suggesting. I knew that this was an impossible situation because you cannot have an actor doing that and so I thought it was time to go. I was amazed, really, how easily they accepted my resignation. When I said 'I think I want to give it up', they said, 'Right Tom, OK'. I was rather shocked by that, but I've recovered.

Did you regret having resigned at the time?

I regretted it in a sense that it was a terrible thing to be cut off from a source of pleasure, from a source of one's happiness. It's a terrible thing going from having lots of attention and being spoiled to having no attention. I had my hair cut and disappeared. Nobody recognised me any more. Of course I regretted that, but in a way that's because I'm not a very strong character. I wanted to again have all that attention and all the success, but I couldn't have it. I got used to that and now I am grateful to have had it longer than anyone else did. The paradox is that even though I have grown very much older and couldn't do the physical things any more, it makes no difference to the dedicated fans. There's no love superior to fan love. You see fan love, like real love, is absolutely blind. They don't see the awfulness and my present disposition. They remember me as I was, and that's wonderful.

When I go, occasionally, to a convention, I am astounded at the warmth of the reception. It's never entirely gone away. I still get a lot of fan mail, mostly from America where I have been successful. There's always a new audience coming up who discover you. They discover I'm still alive and that reassures me and it's a pleasure, a small pleasure.

From what you have said, an awful lot of your Doctor was Tom Baker.

I'm sure all of it *was* Tom Baker because in a sense, when you are playing heroes, they are never acting parts as the character can never develop. This is one of the difficulties in playing heroes; the audience *knows* you are going to survive, you are going to win and outsmart everyone. When the Daleks came on it was very difficult for me to look seriously perturbed because I read the script and I knew I was going to beat them.

I didn't always read all the scripts and I didn't read other people's bits. I still don't read other people's bits — I feel that it is a kind of trespassing, like reading other people's mail. In fact, even when I am in the theatre I sometimes say 'Do I have to come to the read through?' I am told I do and I say, if I'm not in the last bit, 'I do not want to know how it ends'. Why should I know? You get your play and rehearse the scene you do. I'm currently in a hospital series

In production exactly 20 years ago... Season 12 of DOCTOR WHO *(Tom Baker & Lalla Ward)* *Robot*, 1974 ©BBC Video

(MEDICS) playing another doctor and sometimes they try to tell me what is in the next scene and I tell them I haven't read it. They pretend to be appalled, but they must know that there's something in my argument. I don't know why I should know what's going on in the next room as this would give the character an amazing advantage. It would also colour your reaction, and acting is about people reacting to situations. How can you possibly find it easier to say 'Why are you looking at me like that, is there something the matter?' when you know what is the matter.

You said you worked on a building site before you were offered DOCTOR WHO. How did that come about?

Well, it's very common, or it was very common, for actors when they were out of work to get certain jobs, like domestic help, a bartender, a waiter or anything with a phone nearby, or where you knew there was shift work so that you could get away for interviews. I happened to live in a room on the edge of a very smart part of London and somebody introduced me to some builders and they took me on as a kind of elderly tea boy. Then I graduated to wheelbarrows and hods, plus I kept them amused.

Nowadays it's very hard for actors to get going. So many actors write to me and they say 'I'm terribly gifted because my Aunt Maggie said I am and she said I should really go on the stage but I can't get any money. It's £4000 for two years — could you lend me the money?' This is not very difficult the first time, but by the 12th time one feels such an idiot sending cheques off for £4000, and then it feels kind of sadistic if you don't sign them! I keep thinking to myself that they're sick for attention, like I was. They're inadequate but they have to go through with this. Why should it be easy? It wasn't easy for me, it shouldn't be easy for them. Certainly it should be easy to get an education, to get medical attention and for someone to get kissed, but I don't see why it should be easy for someone to become an actor. God save us from actors!

Manchester — where I record MEDICS — like a lot of cities has terrible problems with unemployment. I sometimes walk along Deansgate and see young people in their early twenties begging on the street, and they see me and say the same, dreary old script, 'Can you spare any small change?' They then say 'Christ — Doctor *Who*!' I always have a pocket full of 50p pieces and think it is important to try and share and not reject people, so I reach into my pocket for a 50p piece and as I offer it to them they say 'No, no, no, keep the money — take us away from here, Doctor, go on, take us away...' Instead of cheering them up I sadden them because they recall sitting on the sofa with beans and fishfingers on a Saturday when they were small children. Then they were not so smart but full of optimism and I was their entertainer and sometimes their idol because they didn't know any better. Now I'm not their idol but I remind them very poignantly of a time when they were full of hope. Then comes a crucifying sense of inadequacy of what I can do to relieve that kind of pain. I can't take them where they say it's wonderful and get them out of here, if only one could.

1978, the US Embassy in London, and Marine Sergeant Frank Ziegler faces both sides of DOCTOR WHO'S US sales drive (©Hulton Deutsch)

What do you think the over-riding appeal of DOCTOR WHO has been?

When you say good family entertainment, especially to an American, it sounds as if you're trying to crawl to the idea of family. I actually like the idea of entertaining families. I like the idea of happy, mad families who sometimes hate each other and sometimes love each other at quite different times. This is part of the fun of being in a family. Those are the people I want to entertain. I don't want to entertain any one group, and I think that DOCTOR WHO provided that because it was a very participatory programme. Very small children could watch it peeping between

A match made on Skaro — Tom Baker and Lalla Ward (©Hulton Deutsch)

Andrew 74, filming *The Seeds of Doom* on location (©BBC Video)

their grannie's bosoms or hiding behind the sofa. Grand-parents could enjoy the anxieties of the children and the children could pretend to be frightened. The older ones could follow the majority, and so on.

What was your most favourite moment as the Doctor?

If I had notice of that question I could probably come up with some rather good answers. I do remember one time when I used to walk a dog in the park off the Bayswater Road and some children recognised me and came up and said hello. (I had my old raincoat on, the kind of mac that flashers would wear). Suddenly you know it was just like Peter Pan in that maybe I was going to take them away to somewhere better than being at home or being supervised. We were talking and then an ice cream man came along....all the things that go on and make people anxious about children talking to strange men. For seven years 'Don't talk to strange men' didn't apply to me and so I could meet children in the park and buy them ice creams or lollipops or whatever they wanted. I always had lots of things in my pockets, like photographs of me. I still have over 200 of myself (I don't think any self-respecting actor should walk around without at least 200 pictures of himself in his pockets!). It was nice when I saw some anxious, middle-class mothers looking and then one of them dragging a child away saying 'What's going on, darling?' They would say 'Mum, go away, it's Doctor Who!', and the mother would reply 'Oh yes, alright darling', and she would go off to the other mothers and tell them 'It's Doctor Who'. This was an amazing sensation.

What things give you pleasure in life?

One of my pleasures is to visit a desperately sick actor, about my age, who has had some good parts that I wanted. When I visit I take him a couple of coconuts (yes, coconuts). I find that in a public ward this causes an absolute sensation. It sometimes rallies some of the other people who are dying, as they want to know 'Why coconuts?' Of course I never reveal why.

I got married once for a laugh. That was a terrible error, terrible. I was once at the BBC doing a radio show in Regents Street at the Palace Theatre and quite a lot of people would come up to say 'Hello Tom' and my mind scrambles. Usually I've got quite a good memory and I say 'Hello' and try to bluff it out and say 'God, you're looking fine' as I'm thinking who is *this?* A girl came up to me and said 'Hello, Tom' in that way and my heart jumped and I thought who is this. I said hi and she said 'How are you?' and I replied just fine. She said 'You don't remember, do you?' and I said 'Of course I do, what do you mean I don't remember you. It was a play at the BBC, wasn't it? No, of course it wasn't. Granada? no. But it was a play, wasn't it?' 'No', she replied. 'We used to be *married*!' I was quite startled and felt terrible. Then it all came back to me. I must say she was looking rather better since I'd gone.

I very rarely meet people twice; I never get invited anywhere twice; I've never worked for the same director twice and I have very rarely worked with the same actress twice. Maybe I should draw some conclusion from this. There is no doubt in my mind that when I meet people later they always look much better than when they used to know me. Odd, isn't it?

Tom Baker, thank you very much.

(With thanks to Dallas Jones/Data Extract)

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A STRANGER IN CUSTODY

Robert Cope speaks to the cast of *Breach of the Peace*, the latest instalment in the Stranger series

"WE'LL BE filming from 8am until 6pm so turn up when you like" said a jolly Bill Baggs at the end of the phone. So on the appointed day I duly made my way to the AST Training Centre in Beeston (on the outskirts of Nottingham for those who like me slept their way through geography lessons) arriving just after 10am. Hmmmm, strange me thinks, no sign of life here. So myself and trusty WHO aficionado Simon Biggs had a wander around the building looking for all things luvvie-ish and the sight of a video camera or two. Eventually we spied what I thought might be some extraterrestrial being sent to assassinate our beloved Stranger, but in reality it turned out to be the caretaker whom we then informed of our mission: "Some bloke has phoned up and said he won't be here until half past ten". Obviously some major catastrophe had befallen the filming schedule so we sat down and regaled each other with tales of JFK's shooting (wondering if we'd remember exactly what we were doing when we first saw *Dimensions In Time* - another of life's great tragedies).

Lo and behold, before long a car pulls up and out gets Bill — pencil behind the ear just in case inspiration should strike. "We were up until 1am doing a night shoot so we are starting later than planned. Have you been here long?" After assuring him that we hadn't and exchanging a few pleasantries we watched as various team members began to arrive. I learned that *Breach of the Peace*, as the fifth Stranger outing was to be called, required a police station as part of its plot, so the AST building was on hand to fulfil that requirement. A series of rooms upstairs had been hired, and as the technical crew and make-up/props assistants set to work the disused offices soon came to resemble an interview room and station common room. With the arrival of the actors, rehearsals were soon underway whilst lighting and sound were checked and cameras positioned.

David Troughton was the first to say hello. Forty-four year old son of the late Patrick Troughton and currently touring with the Royal Shakespeare Company, David was reprising his role of Egan from *The Terror Game*, so I asked him about his involvement in the project. "My agent phoned up and said 'There's this funny bloke called Bill Baggins who is interested in doing a video which is sort of DOCTOR WHO-ish'. So I phoned him and he seemed a personable sort of chap, on the ball, so I thought 'What is all this?' I phoned Colin Baker who I knew was going to be involved as well, because he was my Best Man years ago — we've been great mates, although I hadn't seen too much of him recently. He explained it was all on the level and where the videos were sold, and as I was doing nothing else I thought 'OK, let's have a couple of weeks working with Colin', because I'd never actually worked with him before.

"That's when I found out about this subterranean underworld of DOCTOR WHO-dom. My father, of course, went to America and did all that but I never thought it was still alive and kicking." I tentatively suggest that I vaguely remembered he'd been in one story a few years ago. "I've been in three, I always ask which is the third one, as everyone gets the first two." Quickly racking my very fallible memory I come up with *The Curse Of Peladon*, looking very pleased with myself, but I struggled for the second. "*The War Games*," David prompts. "Ah yes, that was one," I quickly lie before admitting defeat on the third — so what was it? "I can't remember," he says. "I was hoping you'd tell me, I was only an extra in it anyway." Answers on a postcard! I quickly mutter something about being only three years old when *The War Games* went out, but I think David was already beginning to suspect that I wasn't the fan who won MASTERMIND on the subject...

So what does this eminent member of the RSC think of the Bill Baggs set up? "Bill is basically doing CV videos. He wants to be a proper director and he's getting all these good actors and he's got us for absolute shite [because] we all have a bloody good laugh, and he sends them off to prominent people in the industry. The reason we're doing this as a police one is that he keeps being told 'Do one like THE BILL!' which he has done. I just hope Bill remembers all this when he's as famous as Spielberg and doing his 900th film. But I've really enjoyed it, it is one of the happiest jobs that I've ever done because there is no pressure. I hope he will, he'll go far."

Being a long standing contributor to DWB you'd think that I'd have done a bit of research before turning up to talk to respected actors like David Troughton, but the old Cope knack of putting one's foot in it begins to surface when I ask him if he enjoyed doing THE NEW STATESMAN, only to be told it was brother Michael who appeared in that series. And then, when he says he is best remembered for A VERY PECULIAR PRACTICE, I have to admit to never having seen it. By now David obviously thinks I'm a real prat but his good nature prevents him from showing any outward signs of such dark thoughts. I struggle on regardless, venturing to suggest that I thought THE NEW STATESMAN has won some awards. "No it didn't. It should have done, it was a cult on BBC2, they put it on BBC1 for the repeat, back on BBC2 for the next series and then sort of 'lost' the tapes because it was too political for the BBC at the time. It was when Thatcher had got her claws into everyone, I think someone high up said 'We don't want this Thatcher lookalike on TV' because the Vice Chancellor went mad, it was so prophetic. It was just what Thatcher has done, laid waste the countryside (which the Vice Chancellor did to the university) and he went mad. What happened to Thatcher? She went mad! Let's hope we never get anyone like that again but we'll pay for it for the next 50 years. She's changed the psyche of a nation." Talk turns from politics to television and I again hit on a raw nerve when mentioning UK Gold. "I got £10 for an episode of SURVIVORS I did. Normally that would be a renegotiable fee based on today's prices, but the BBC have pulled a fast one. They've got it under overseas repeats because the company they're selling it to probably isn't based in this country. It's extra-terrestrial. Equity managed to up it from 4% of nothing to 8% of nothing but oh, it makes me so angry."

At this point a make-up lady pops in and informs David that he's next in the chair, which co-incides with the arrival of Colin Baker and Caroline John. Colin bounds about with his usual loud enthusiasm, his presence clearly enjoyed by everyone on the set. As Colin is only available for a few days' filming, most of today's shoot involves his scenes. "Not still writing for that tatty rag," he jokes, before grabbing a copy of the new DWB to scour for the latest on the Spielberg bid for the show. It isn't long until he, too, is whisked off to rehearse a scene with David, leaving me to talk to Caroline John, who is eating an apple but seems a bit guarded about talking to me for some reason.

Caroline hasn't been at the forefront of fan activity, although she jumped at the chance of working with the gang on *Breach of the Peace*. "I was asked to be in this by Bill Baggs at Blue Box. He gave me the script to read which I thought was great so I said OK, I'll do it." With her recent emergence into the fan limelight I wondered if she had fond memories of DOCTOR WHO. "It was only a year or so of my life so it sort of becomes part of your career, rather less important than my four years at the National Theatre for instance. I did learn a lot about doing television and the technique involved, for which I'll always be grateful. Whilst I was there the show had a change of producers and Barry came in and the powers that be thought the format of having a clever scientist probably wasn't to the advantage of The Doctor — I don't know though, I'm guessing. At the time I didn't think I was particularly good in it but I saw a video of *The Silurians* a few months back and thought 'That's alright'. I do feel about a lot of them — like the most recent video *Inferno* — that one has to remember that they were going out week by week, and now when you watch them as a whole you suddenly think 'God, not this scene again'."

Caroline went on to work with Tom Baker on the 1981 BBC adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* so I wondered how she found working with Pertwee, Tom and now Colin Baker? "They are

David Troughton - son of Patrick - and the back of Colin Baker's head! (©BBV)

very different people. There really isn't a lot of time to get to know people, you just do it and go home. I think Tom Baker was a very god actor but I respect all three of them." Was she surprised at the renaissance of interest in her WHO work, particularly from younger viewers seeing it for the first time? "I think it's because I haven't been around. I'm under no false illusion that I'm just part of a collection, like if you are collecting comics. I'm amazed that they're not disappointed that I'm 24 years older because it's quite difficult to accept that people grow old. In people's imaginations they always see the TV image from so many years ago, looking like Liz Shaw which I certainly don't do now. Nobody has given me the impression that they are massively disappointed so far."

Of her brief appearance in *The Five Doctors*, she says, "I would have done more if they'd wanted me to but nobody asked me to. It was nice to be there all the same." Most recently Liz Shaw popped up in the infamous Albert Square romp: "That was quite interesting. I remember *The Ambassadors of Death* and all the new technology DOCTOR WHO seemed to take on board, and this 3D thing was another one. It's very interesting from an actor's point of view. Yes, it was done terribly quickly and it was people's free time, but it was for a very good cause."

Looking back now, what does Caroline think of her time as Liz? "What I think is quite good is that I can now see past what I looked like as opposed to what I'm doing. I approve of what I'm doing in it. I'm playing what I should have been playing and playing it rather well. I should have had a lot more encouragement at the time because I carried around with me a feeling of 'Oh dear, best not talk about that because I wasn't very good in it.' It's like if you're doing this magazine now and nobody ever says well done, that was a good article, and after a year you are replaced. I had to be replaced anyway because I was going to have a baby but you can see what I'm getting at. It's a shame that people who make policies don't explain them to lesser mortals like myself." And with that she is taken off to rehearse her role as DCI Diana Sellers with Colin, or more accurately (from what I heard), to prompt Colin on his lines!

As the unit gathered and the whole set up was ready, Bill took the helm by explaining what he wanted during a scene where Egan interrogates The Stranger, resorting to violence in the process. The room in which this was done is tiny and to an outsider it looked as if they were going for the record on how many people you could squeeze into a cupboard. As take after take was demanded by the director, it wasn't hard to see why Bill Baggs' efforts to realise his visions had been so successful.

Breach of the Peace is the fourth video to be scripted by Nicholas Briggs, and readers of DWB will perhaps recall some of my tongue in cheek reviews of Nick's *Myth Makers* appearances, so I was looking forward to turning the tables and finding out about one of fandom's most prominent figures. As with most of us Nick's interest in Time Lords began early. "I have been a fan ever since I can remember. I can recall bits of *The Daleks' Master Plan* and I clearly remember *The Tenth Planet*. Sad, isn't it? I'm always appalling friends who aren't fans by being able to navigate through my life by knowing what DOCTOR WHO story was on at the time! It does add a certain structure to your life. In 1974 I met Nick Leyton down in Southampton, who was the first fan apart from myself that I'd ever met, so we were constantly trying to piece together the history of DOCTOR WHO." How, then, did this eager young fan turn into the writer we see now? "I have always found it easier to write rather than read, it was always easy to make things up. I think this stems from a problem in my childhood when my reading age was nine months behind everyone else — I've never recovered from reading being a chore. Inevitably I used to write DOCTOR WHO stories, in fact when my Grandmother died about a year or so ago my mother found these DOCTOR WHO stories I'd written her. I'd sent her episodes every two weeks...the poor woman must have been bored stiff. That whole thing about creating stories and fantasies made me want to act and led me to drama school, the Rose Bruford college which co-incidently is the same one Tom Baker attended. When I left there I got a few fringe jobs but eventually descended into four years of unemployment, and you know what happens after a while. They say 'You can't do that, it's not working so you'll need retraining' and off you go. I decided to learn to touch type, and I got up to about 60 words per minute. Then I heard through friends that Stephen Payne at Visual Imagination was looking for someone to do the boring end of the job which would probably involve a bit of typing. I thought it would tide me over for a while but once you've got a bit of money coming in — and I must stress little bit — I progressed from putting things in envelopes and typing out the letters page in *Starburst* to writing articles for them. By the end I was doing a lot because I got to know the structure required, so I could knock out things quite quickly that would fit the format without drastic editing."

Throughout our conversation people sporadically pop in and suggest it is time for Nick to do his one scene in this production as DCI Evans. Off he trots, but keeps returning as plans quickly change and different shots are lined up. Nick is of course best known for his fronting of the Reeltime Pictures' *Myth Makers* range which have grown steadily in popularity over the years. "I did a convention at Southampton, being a prat on stage and interviewing people and Keith Barnfather had spotted me. He had already done two *Myth Makers* by then with a guy called Keith Harrison (I think) who was an ex-Channel 4 link man. He did fantastic interviews with Michael Wisher and John Leeson, but he didn't know DOCTOR WHO. He made fundamental WHO errors, for instance Mike Wisher said that for the Daleks he used to sit in a booth with a microphone doing the voices, so then he talked to John Leeson who said the same about K9, and Keith would say "So you'd be sitting in there with Michael Wisher" which is a perfectly reasonable conclusion to come to, but DOCTOR WHO fans would get annoyed because they all knew the Daleks and K9 never appeared together. They were cringe making errors really, I brought my own cringe making errors by forgetting what I was going to ask next because I was so nervous. So Keith Barnfather wanted someone who knew DOCTOR WHO and was cheap, and I fitted that bill perfectly."

(The washing's) on the line for Colin Baker as The Stranger

Nick's first contact with Bill Baggs came with the involvement with a local group in Southampton "There was a young 16 year old Bill Baggs bossing everyone a lot older than him about and annoying people, but managing to get things done all the same." The now-concluded Audio Visuals series of the eighties in which Nick played The Doctor led to him reuniting with Baggs on the videos. "It was because Bill worked with me on the audio plays that I got involved with the videos. He wanted a script for the third one, I think he'd said to Gary Russell that he'd thought of me because he wanted a more action based script which he knew I was good at. We worked on a script for ages that was going to be completely different, nothing to do with the Stranger series, but we realised it would be too expensive to make in the end. So then he said can't you quickly adapt one of your audio plays to which I said no, but I agreed to take one of them as a starting point and go off from there. I took one called *Conglomerate* which was set in a tube station on another planet, as Bill said he could get a railway station and we could work from that."

Had the scripts changed a lot from the drafted version to final product? "Bill's favourite phrase is 'I must challenge these [scripts]. He really tends to change things during filming and editing. For instance he cut a lot of speeches during *In Memory Alone* and

Caroline John and old Red-eye himself, Nicholas Briggs (©BBV)

when I saw the first edit of it I was really frustrated because it wasn't telling the story in the way I wanted it to. I had a long, fairly heated, discussion on the phone and he told me "You've got to learn that not everything you write works!" And when you think about it Bill had been struggling away editing this thing and then a bastard comes on the phone lecturing him on how it should be done. It's so difficult to judge the story on the screen though. With *Airzone* Bill had gone through my original draft and virtually re-written it into something which vaguely resembled my submission, then I rewrote what he had written which had given me an idea of the direction he wanted the script to go. We had to write Jon Pertwee in at the eleventh hour. Bill phoned me one evening and said 'You know that scene where Peter Davison's character is watching the edit of his Airzone documentary? I reckon there should be an old bloke there, a sort of mentor.' By that stage they had started shooting so I asked who he'd got in mind for it 'Jon Pertwee' came the reply. Jon had been on the phone to him and just wouldn't take no for an answer. Bill kept saying 'Yes, I'd like to work with you in the **future**' and Jon just went on and on 'I want to work on **this one** please." So that was that. I was very pleased with the finished product. It is more accessible to a viewing audience, *The Terror Game* we think suffers from having too much science fiction in it so this one had got hardly any in. Colin Baker thinks this doesn't matter because the characters will be known from *Terror Game, so I hope* he's right." Before we parted company I discovered that Nick will doing a repertory season in Sidmouth for the summer. "I'm the only actor who is praying for small parts so that I don't have loads to learn". And off he goes to join the others.

From the day I spent with Bill and his team of actors and technicians it was clear that he takes his involvement very seriously and expects equal dedication from all those around him. I had hoped to talk to Bill himself but with the rigours of a tight filming schedule it was not to be. Speaking to him on the phone a few days later he expressed himself well satisfied with the filming on *Breach of the Peace and was toying with various* options for the next project, which tentatively included a follow-up to *Airzone* in August. As I write this Bill is editing *Breach of the Peace* for a July release which will see THE STRANGER saga taking another twist. With the standards achieved so far I wouldn't mind betting that quite a few of us will be awaiting each new release with increasing anticipation. There's just one more thing I'd like to mention...the sponge pudding at the local pub in Beeston was out of this world. Now there is a subject for a major video drama if ever there was one! No hang on a minute, with Colin Baker involved, keeping the props around might be a bit difficult — just ask Tony Selby and Joan Sims!

The Terror Game

"The Stranger's past unfolds" proclaims the jacket of Bill Baggs' latest video presentation *The Terror Game*, so naturally I was full of expectation as I inserted the cassette into the video. Now, some 50 minutes later, I'm not sure whether it has unfolded enough.

In this fourth entry into the Stranger catalogue our hero finds himself having materialised in the vicinity of a nightclub. Confused and bewildered he stumbles in and meets Norman, the put upon gofer, and then promptly collapses. Enter cockney manageress Tamora Hennessey who takes pity on the shambling figure before her offering coffee and a nice line in condescending chit-chat. Meanwhile not too far away two mercenaries, Egan and his accomplice Saul, are planning an attack upon the club intent on destroying the mysterious being that lurks upstairs. Soon, whilst on a recce, they encounter the Stranger and it becomes clear that he is — or was — part of these events and they set about trying to extract the truth of his sudden appearance and begin to delve into his fading memories.

So then, this is the premise of *The Terror Game* which is set directly after *In Memory Alone* and marks Nicholas Briggs' attempts to flesh out the idea of the series and take it from being pseudo-WHO into an altogether more ambitious realm of science fiction - a kind of blending of THE TOMORROW PEOPLE, LOGAN'S RUN and BLAKE'S SEVEN. In doing so he has unfortunately confused this viewer with constant references to Preceptors, the Protectorate and Dimensional Webs. From what I can make out the Preceptors are a super race which don't necessarily exist on a physical level, whilst the Protectorate are a bunch of intergalactic law enforcers who have taken their job a bit to heart and caused some great harm to the Preceptors. Agents such as Egan and Saul roam the cosmos tracking down their protagonists causing them as much harm as possible in a bid to avenge their race. The Stranger was supposed to accompany them on their mission. However he was somehow captured by the Protectorate and put through an 'Estrangement programme' which wiped his memory and he was despatched on what is described as "a wild goose chase" with a custodian to keep an eye on him (which is where the shapely Miss Bryant fits in to the scheme of things.) Now he has arrived at his original destination but his unstable condition poses a threat to both parties. That, I think, is the idea anyway.

The Briggs/Baggs team have perhaps wisely tried to redefine the nature of the character and his background in order to open up the story possibilities and thus give THE STRANGER a longer lifespan. Where this production benefits is Bill Baggs increasingly adept story-telling which presents a stark image of desperation and danger. David Troughton turns in a commanding debut as interdimensional terrorist Egan, whose understanding of the motivation for his crimes is in excess of his bullying partner Saul, played with gutsy bravado by John Wadmore. Louise Jameson makes Tomara initially seem like a fitting companion to Bill Sykes but as events move on her chirpy mask slips to reveal her true nature. A dry performance from Nicholas Pegg as Norman complements nicely the intense backdrop whilst a heavily disguised Nick Briggs brings some pathos to the 'reconstructed' Raven swamped in blood soaked bandages. Overall this is obviously a well thought out idea which could benefit from a bit more clarity (at least for me unless I'm being a real thicko) but is none the less a formidable piece of drama which is certainly another compelling addition to the range. We do at last get to learn the Stranger's name which is....well, I'll leave you to find that out for yourselves. Colin Baker is on good form once more as the uncomfortable truth of his past begins to dawn. Not only does Nick Briggs write and act in *The Terror Game* but this time he's credited as composer as well. Obviously he won't be satisfied until he's won a BAFTA for something, but in the meantime his contribution on all levels is admirable.

Bill Baggs' high production values and guiding light at the directorial helm has turned in another video of quality which should add to BBV's growing reputation for excellence.(8)

Interviews and review by Robert Cope

THE TERROR GAME is available by post from: BBV, 53 South Road, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 1LY. Priced at £12.00 (Cheques made payable to BBV)

Colin Baker IS The Stranger! (©BBV)

Richard G Perrett acclaims the adventures of the FBI's oddest team, now showing on Sky One, and coming to BBC2 soon...

RECIPE for an unlikely series: Take one part KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER, one part TWIN PEAKS, one part *Manhunter*; season with half a dozen cop shows with the traditional mismatched partners... Result: THE X-FILES, probably the best show currently airing on British television. A bold statement, yes, but I believe it to be true. From the moment that I caught the second episode, I was hooked.

The first thing that strikes one about this series is that someone in American television has finally remembered how to make a good title sequence, one that does more than simply string a sequence of clips together. This one tells you precisely what to expect — a series of distorted faces, mysterious objects, the words 'Paranormal Activity'...a spindly figure falls away from the viewer toward a giant hand. The two stars of the show are credited subtly as small photos on FBI identification cards, and the sequence ends ambiguously on a close-up of a blinking eye, and the message (the warning?): ***The truth is out there.*** Accompanied by a wonderfully low-key theme, it sets the concept up perfectly, without any need for the sort of cringe-worthy narration that mars the opening of QUANTUM LEAP. It's the sort of opening that it seemed the Americans had lost the knack of producing twenty years ago (of course, the British haven't been much better of late — RED DWARF please note!).

Fox Mulder, the show's focal character, is played by David Duchovny, who many will remember as TWIN PEAKS' transvestite FBI agent Dennis (Denise) Bryson. He could most recently be seen alongside Ro Laren herself, Michelle Forbes, in the Brad Pitt serial killer flick, *Kalifornia*. Duchovny has been criticised in some quarters for his quiet, unobtrusive, and (some would say) bland performance, but not only is this not always the case, but when it is, it is perfectly in character. Mulder is an enigma within the bureau, where he has been dubbed 'Spooky' by most of his colleagues, who adopt a condescending air toward Mulder's speciality, The X Files. These date back to the earliest days of the bureau (in one episode Mulder holds a file aloft, proclaiming it to be a piece of history in itself — the first X-File, in the hand of Hoover himself), and document the mysterious, the unsolved and the insoluble. Most of the organisation regards the files, and therefore Mulder himself, as something of a joke.

Then into Mulder's little world is thrust the much more straight-laced Dana Scully, played by Gillian Anderson. A medical doctor, with a touch of Clarice Starling about her, she is a more typical agent, concerned with departmental rules and regulations, sceptical about most of Mulder's more outlandish theories, but never to the point of stubbornly ignoring the facts that are frequently thrown to light. Although the series started off with a couple of UFO stories, other themes have included a genetic mutant with the ability to alter his physical structure, telekinesis, parasitical aliens embedded in ice for millions of years, artificial intelligence, cloning, pyrokinesis and others.

The series has a genuinely creepy feel, and a defiantly graphic depiction of events. *Ice* is a good example of this. On the surface it reads like a rip-off of John Carpenter's *The Thing*, but manages to wind the tension up to breaking point with only a tenth of the special effects employed by that landmark horror film. To go into detail about the plot would be to spoil the effect but the siege-like atmosphere of the arctic base gives David Duchovny in particular the chance to flesh out Mulder, and prove he is a real human being with fears and paranoia just like everybody else. One actually begins to wonder about the fate of the main characters. As with many of the episodes, the conclusion is appropriately final, yet downbeat and decidedly open-ended.

Not every episode has been a triumph, of course. *The Jersey Devil*, for instance, feels very out-of-step with most of the rest of the series, and could probably have been done on many other cop shows, given a light rewrite. There's also a slightly questionable decision in the ill-received episode *Space* to ascribe the destruction of the US space shuttle Challenger to sabotage carried out by an alien-possessed ex-astronaut.

The only other major (semi) regular character is played by Jerry Hardin (THE NEXT GENERATION's Mark Twain, seen sans makeup here). Sometimes referred to off-screen as Deep Throat, a name finally made official in the final episode, *The Erlenmeyer Flask*, his character functions in much the same way as Donald Sutherland's X in the Oliver Stone film, *J.F.K.* He feeds Mulder information, gives him warnings, even acting to stop Mulder's expulsion from the bureau in Fallen Angel, though *E.B.E* casts doubt on his motives. Just who Deep Throat is, and the nature of his exact position and interest in the X Files and Mulder, is unclear, but at the conclusion of *Fallen Angel* he offers Mulder's FBI superior the following advice: "Keep your friends close...and your enemies closer."

As the first season of THE X-FILES moves towards its conclusion on Sky, those who've come late to the series can comfort themselves with the knowledge that a second season is already in the works, and that BBC2 has snapped up the show as a replacement for QUANTUM LEAP. That's good news — the series deserves a wider audience than Sky One's loyal telefantasy crowd.

Richard G. Perrett

BELOW: Complete X-FILES episode guide with US transmission dates...

The X-Files: Season One

1)**"The X-Files"** 10th September 1993
WRITER CHRIS CARTER; DIRECTOR ROBERT MANDEL
Dana Scully, FBI agent and M.D., is assigned to keep an eye on the eccentric investigations of Fox 'Spooky' Mulder. High school classmates are murdered or missing in Oregon. Mulder thinks this may be a case of experiments conducted by aliens.
**** (A match made in chemistry)

2)**Deep Throat** 17th September 1993
WRITER CHRIS CARTER; DIRECTOR DANIEL SACKHEIM
An Air Force test pilot is missing at a remote base. A mysterious man with insider knowledge warns Mulder he runs a risk if he goes near the base. Mulder believes the military have captured UFO's.
** (Jerry Hardin as DT will reappear....)

3)**Squeeze** 24th September 1993
WRITERS GLEN MORGAN & JAMES WONG; DIRECTOR HARRY LONGSTREET
A smug young agent reluctantly asks for help solving a series of brutal cannabalistic murders occurring under seemingly impossible circumstances. Mulder becomes convinced the killings have been happening at 30 year intervals for a century.
***** (Do not watch alone)

4)**Conduit** 1st October 1993
WRITERS ALEX GANSA & HOWARD GORDON; DIRECTOR DANIEL SACKHEIM
A woman who has been ridiculed for years because she claims she saw a UFO as a child loses her daughter on a camping trip. Mulder believes she was taken by aliens, just as his sister was. The woman's son compulsively draws marks on paper.
**** (Return to theme that many people may have been marked by aliens)

5)**The Jersey Devil** 8th October 1993
WRITER CHRIS CARTER; DIRECTOR JOE NAPOLITANO
Something seems to have been eating human bodies in the woods near Atlantic City, but the police claim to have seen nothing. The homeless people know better. Mulder looks for a missing link.
*** (Scully has a date)

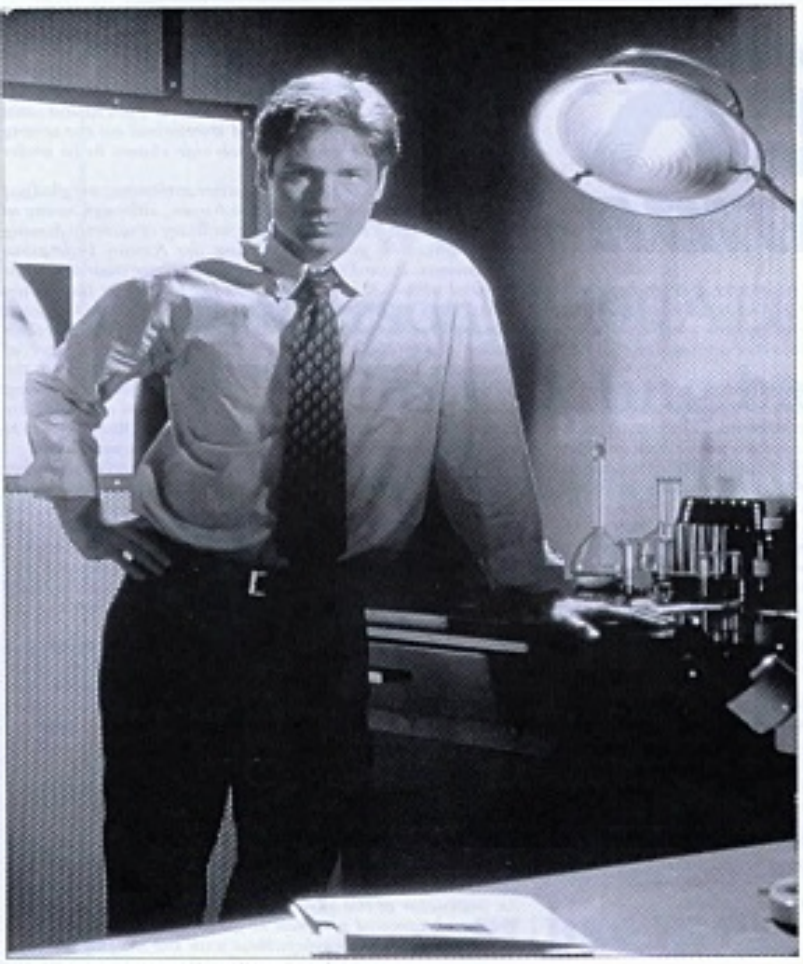
6)**Shadows** 22nd October 1993
WRITERS GLEN MORGAN & JAMES WONG; DIRECTOR MICHAEL KATLEMAN
Two muggers are found dead from very unnatural causes. Mulder and Scully are led to a very nervous secretary whose boss recently died. Is there an unseen force protecting her?
*** ½ (Beware blood in the tub)

7)**Ghost in the Machine** 29th October 1993
WRITERS ALEX GANSA & HOWARD GORDON; DIRECTOR JERROLD FREEDMAN
An electronics company CEO seems to have been electrocuted by a building malfunction. But what interest does Deep Throat have in the building's computer system?
*** ½ (Root for the machine)

8)**Ice** 5th November 1993
WRITERS GLEN MORGAN & JAMES WONG; DIRECTOR DAVID NUTTER
Drilling for ice core samples from prehistoric times unleashes havoc at an arctic research station. Mulder and Scully take two scientists to investigate. Something unearthly has been revived.
**** ½ (Ok, it's been done, but it works!)

9)**Space** 12th November 1993
WRITER CHRIS CARTER; DIRECTOR WILLIAM GRAHAM
The unthinkable may be happening — is someone causing accidents at NASA to stop shuttle missions? A veteran astronaut has some very uncomfortable memories — and maybe more — that he brought back with him from orbit.
** (Too weird, even for X-FILES)

10)**Fallen Angel** 19th November 1993
WRITERS HOWARD GORDON & ALEX GANSA; DIRECTOR LARRY SHAW
Something crashed in the woods. Deep Throat tips Mulder off that there is an alien crash site but the government will go to



'Spooky' Mulder (David Duchovny) © Sky One

Gillian Anderson & David Duchovny as Agents Scully & Mulder — Keepers of the X-Files (©Sky One)

great lengths to hide it. Mulder's job and life are threatened as he draws very close to an alien encounter.
****½ (Uses names of real UFO study groups for amateurs drawn to site)

11)**Eve** 10th December 1993
WRITERS KENNETH BILLER & CHRIS BRANCATO; DIRECTOR FRED GERBER
Mulder and Scully investigate a mysterious murder of a man with a young daughter. Then they learn of an identical murder at the same time many miles away and discover that the man's daughter looks identical to the first girl. What kind of genetic research was the government funding years ago?
**** (Why do mad doctors always run off to South America?)

12)**Fire** 17th December 1993
WRITER CHRIS CARTER; DIRECTOR LARRY SHAW
British politicians and royalty are threatened by a terrorist who can burst into flame at will. Amanda Pays guests as a police consultant who broke Mulder's heart in his Oxford days and she's still playing games with him.
****½ (Guess who Scully does not like?)

13)**Beyond the Sea** 7th January 1994
WRITERS GLEN MORGAN & JAMES WONG; DIRECTOR DAVID NUTTER
The death of Scully's father and two kidnapped teenagers give a convict on death row a chance to bargain for his life by claiming to have psychic powers that can save the teens. Did he arrange the kidnapping just for this purpose, or does he have real abilities?
***** (Beware the blue devil)

14)**GenderBender** 21st January 1994
WRITERS LARRY BARBER & PAUL BARBER; DIRECTOR ROB BOWMAN
A series of murders seem to be linked to singles bars, but a survivor swears he picked up a woman who turned into a man after sex. The trail leads Mulder and Scully to a reclusive religious community that shuns modern technology for a plain life.
***** (There's something in the barn and it's not Jay Davison)

15)**Lazarus** 4th February 1994
WRITERS ALEX GANSA & PAUL BARBER; DIRECTOR DAVID NUTTER
Scully's old partner dies on the operating table after stopping a bank robber. The robber also dies at the hospital but Scully refuses to give up on reviving her friend and there is a miracle resuscitation — but who has come back to life?
**½ (Deja Voodoo!)

16)**Young at Heart** 11th February 1994
WRITERS SCOTT KAUFER & CHRIS CARTER; DIRECTOR MICHAEL LANGE
A convict sent away by Mulder is dying to get revenge. And after he dies he comes back to kill Mulder's friends and then Mulder. He looks great except for that hand.
** (Another mad scientist lost his grant)

17)**E.B.E.** 18th February 1994
Deep Throat warns Mulder that he is being closely watched. Mulder thinks they are on the trail of an Extra-terrestrial Biological Entity that the government is trying to move across the country by truck. Deep Throat offers some help — but Scully proves he has lied. Has he been misleading Mulder all along?
***** (Paranoia becomes an artform as Deep Throat spins one story after another)

18)**Miracle Man** 18th March 1994
WRITERS HOWARD GORDON & CHRIS CARTER; DIRECTOR MICHAEL LANGE
When a faith healer's power seems to reverse its effect, his faith is somewhat shaken. But Mulder still experiences his powers...
*** (Keep the faith...)

19)**Shapes** 1st April 1994
WRITER MARILYN OSBORN; DIRECTOR DAVID NUTTER
A case of lycanthropy? Mulder investigates events which hark back to the subject of the very first X-File...
** ½ (Howling mad...)

20)**Darkness Falls** 15th April 1994
WRITER CHRIS CARTER; DIRECTOR JOE NAPOLITANO
Mulder discovers that the law is the least of the dangers which threatens those who threaten the environment...
**** (In TWIN PEAKS territory, the trees are not what they seem...)

21)**Tooms** 22nd April 1994
WRITER GLEN MORGAN & JAMES WONG; DIRECTOR DAVID NUTTER
He's out — and he must kill once more to satisfy his needs. Scully and Mulder must work by the book if they're to stop him...
***** (Sequels already?)

22)**Born Again** 29th April 1994
WRITERS HOWARD GORDON & ALEX GANSA; DIRECTOR JERROLD FREEDMAN
Scully and Mulder investigate two murders which Mulder believes may be linked. He thinks that the victim in the first murder is his suspect for the second...
*** (Here we go again?)

23)**Roland** 6th May 1994
WRITER CHRIS RUPPENTHAL; DIRECTOR DAVID NUTTER
A mentally handicapped janitor is prime suspect for the murder of two researchers...but then Scully and Mulder find themselves dealing with a scientist's cryogenicallly preserved brain...
***½ (Mulder cleans up after the caretaker....)

24)**The Erlenmeyer Flask** 13th May 1994
WRITER CHRIS CARTER; DIRECTOR RW GOODWIN
Deep Throat leads the agents into their most dangerous case yet...the government is experimenting with alien DNA, and those who know of this are being eliminated...
***** (But is he really dead?)

Kathleen Toth & Anthony Brown

GET TOPPED UP !

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"Er,hasn`t the terrible Zodin got all that,Zoe?"
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STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION

23|**Emergence** 14th May 1994

TELEPLAY BY JOE MENOSKY; STORY BY BRANNON BRAGA; DIRECTOR CLIFF BOYLE; MUSIC JAY CHATTAWAY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR PHILIP BARBERIO

Technobabble ahoy as the ship seems to be developing its way towards sentience on the holodeck.

Data is continuing his study of what it means to be human by performing a scene from The Tempest on the holodeck for an audience of one — Captain Picard. Picard is trying to explain the meaning of the scene to the android when both notice what sounds like a train coming in the distance. They look up to find a steam locomotive bearing down upon their pastoral setting. They are so surprised that Data barely pushes the Captain out of the way before the train hurtles past them. Data identifies the train as being part of Doctor Crusher's program about the Orient Express, but he cannot explain how the two programs managed to merge. Picard orders the holodecks shut down until an answer is found.

The Enterprise had encountered an unexpected magnascopic storm but now is back on schedule with its mission to look for new colony sites for the Federation. Or at least it had seemed that things were back to normal. The Enterprise suddenly jumps from impulse into warp by itself. The helm controls are useless and the computer overrides are locked out. Just as abruptly, the ship drops back to impulse and all functions are restored.

As the engineering staff searches for an explanation to this mystery, Geordi finds something even more puzzling. The jump to warp was actually a lucky incident. A dangerous condition had built up around the warp nacelles undetected and the ship could have blown up if they had not jumped to warp drive. When Data and Geordi inspect a panel later, they find an unusual looking new circuit node attached to several systems, including sensors and warp drive. They have no idea where it came from, nor can they remove it. It is protected by a force field. Investigation turns up several more such nodes scattered around the ship.

Data speculates that they may somehow be an effect of the magnascopic storm. More importantly, all the circuit lines seem to intersect in holodeck 3. They find the holodeck is back in operation despite the shutdown and several programs are running at once. Data, Worf and Riker enter the holodeck and find themselves onboard a train running through the night. The passengers are an odd assembly of people from different time periods. There is a knight in armour, a gunfighter, flappers from the Roaring Twenties, and a conductor who is collecting tickets.

When the engineer threatens to remove the Enterprise officers, the train's engineer appears demanding they be allowed to stay and help. He is promptly shot by a gangster who says the engineer was trying to hijack the train. At that moment the Enterprise jumps back into warp and sets a course of its own. The train conductor announces that they are on their way.

The gangster threatens the intruders again and Data warns that the holodeck safeties have been disengaged. They return to the bridge and hold a conference. The circuit nodes are exerting ever more control over the entire ship and they decide that the holodeck scene is a rudimentary neural net in the making. The Enterprise may be creating an intelligence, and emergent property of its vast data base. The question is, what does the ship want? Troi thinks the holodeck exhibits a kind of symbolic logic and she wants to try to communicate with the emerging consciousness. Picard warns them all that if the ship is developing into a new kind of intelligence, they must treat it with the same respect they would accord other species.

Returning to the holodeck, Data tries to depolarize the power grid under the holodeck floor while Troi and the others distract the passengers. The gangster says they must get to Keystone City, where everything begins, but their most important destination is Virtiform City. The gangster suddenly leaves the train and goes up some stairs to a street above, with the Enterprise officers in close pursuit...

DAVID HUDDLESTON plays the conductor on the mystery train. But this is mostly a story requiring extensive use of the regular cast and a lot of technical dialogue that one suspects makes no sense whatsoever. If you wonder what a magnascopic storm is, you will go on wondering.(5)

24|**Preemptive Strike** 21st May 1994

TELEPLAY BY RENE ECHEVARRIA; STORY BY NAREN SHANKAR; DIRECTOR PATRICK STEWART; MUSIC JAY CHATTAWAY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR JOE BAUER

Ensign Ro returns, dispelling the rumour that she chose to remain a child after *Rascals*, her last appearance nearly two years ago. But she is here to lend support to the VOYAGER plotline as the Maquis become more active.

Ro Laren is welcomed back to the Enterprise after a year spent at the prestigious school for advanced tactical training — a plum assignment made possible by a strong recommendation from Captain Picard to overcome her past troubles with Starfleet. The Bajoran has never been heavy on the social graces and is a bit overwhelmed by the crew's attentions. She is much more comfortable in private conversation with the Captain, whom she thanks for making her life so different from what it was when they met. He congratulates her on a promotion to Lieutenant.

She has not even had time to unpack before a distress signal comes in from a Cardassian ship. The sensors show it is under attack by several small ships which appear to be of Federation design. The Enterprise crew assume these are Maquis fighters — a group of underground resistance fighters organised in the new demilitarised zone created by treaty with the Cardassians. Former Federation and Cardassian colonies have found themselves on the wrong sides of the new border and each side claims to be under threat of attack from the other.

Both Cardassian and Federation authorities are pledged to suppress these armed civilian forces, although many in Starfleet suspect the Cardassian military is secretly arming and supporting groups attacking the former Federation settlements. Picard orders the ships to cease their attack or be fired upon. A spread of photons has to be laid down before they actually break off and flee to safety in the zone. Doctor Crusher gives aid to Cardassian wounded, but their leader complains bitterly to Picard about the level of weaponry the Maquis are getting and suggests that the former Starfleet officers known to be among them are being aided. Picard points out that the Cardassian colonists are getting high tech weapons somehow as well. Both deny that any official assistance is being given to the combatants.

This incident is followed almost immediately by another visit from Admiral Necheyev, who has been over-seeing implementation of the new treaty with the Cardassians. She tells Picard that the truth is that they have caught the Cardassians supplying weapons to their colonists. Starfleet has also seen signs that the Maquis are moving beyond self-defense to a more aggressive posture. She fears they may plan attacks on the Cardassian military itself beyond the zone and start a war in which millions will die.

She says they need better intelligence about the Maquis but they must find them first. They are scattered into small cells. Picard says she is saying they need an infiltrator. Necheyev already knows that — in fact, the person Starfleet wants for that assignment is already here on the Enterprise. Picard has the task of telling Ro what is wanted. They think she is ideal for this job because she is Bajoran, and therefore naturally hostile to Cardassians, has had a troubled history with Starfleet to use as a cover and she has had the advanced training she needs to operate in this situation.

Ro is not so confident as Picard that this is a great opportunity for her. She has spent most of her life fighting Cardassians and watched them torture her father to death. An instructor at the advanced training school that she had liked and admired resigned to go join the Maquis. Picard tells her that they all sympathise with the Maquis but they cannot be allowed to start another full scale war with the Cardassians. Ro decides to take the assignment to validate Picard's faith in her.

She is set up as being on the run for killing a Cardassian soldier and hides from the Enterprise crew in a rough bar in the zone. A man lies to pursuers about her presence, but then stuns her. This is her introduction to the Maquis. She wakes up in one of their encampments but they do not trust her immediately. She tells them that she was court martialled in Starfleet and sent to the stockade, which is true. After her release she says she got tired of watching them placate the Cardassians. She asks to join them, but is still closely watched while they try to verify her story.

But the elderly human who leads this cell trusts her immediately. He misses old Bajoran friends and knows much about her culture. Ro begins to feel a rapport with this kindly man but is still distrusted by several other members of the cell. She wins them over by getting needed medical supplies right off the Enterprise by a daring ruse that briefly penetrates the ship's shields. Actually, her small craft was detected at the last moment but Picard realises who it is and allows the supplies to be taken.

Now that she is trusted by the Maquis, Ro is able to later meet with Picard on the Enterprise and tell him that the Maquis fear that the Cardassians are preparing to supply their colonists with biogenic weapons. The Captain doubts the Cardassians would go so far, but he thinks they can use this fear as bait to lure the Maquis into an attack in the open on a phony target with false information relayed through Ro. Ro suddenly realises that she is going to be called upon to lead the Maquis into a trap...

Michelle Forbes, who was originally tapped to play the role that became Major Kira on DEEP SPACE NINE, returns to the fold as Ro Laren, the first Bajoran seen on TNG. Which immediately prompted rumours that she would be joining the cast of VOYAGER. That would happen only if she has overcome her reluctance to sign a long term TV contract. Her nose is slightly different these days, being brought into line with the Bajoran re-design done for DS9.

John Franklyn-Robbins and Shannon Cochran are Maquis leaders. Richard Poe appears again as the Cardassian Gul who oversees the zone and Natalija Nogulich makes yet another visit as the slightly less chilly Admiral Necheyev. This episode was very well received and does feature strong acting, especially between Forbes and director Stewart, as Ro finds herself in deep conflict. However, the conflict between surrogate father figures is laid on rather thick and expecting an old Bajoran freedom fighter to actively betray people fighting Cardassians seems rather insensitive if not of Starfleet, then certainly of Picard.(8)

Kathleen Toth

Homeward — A disguised Worf (©Paramount)

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And Gambit makes Three...

***VIDEO GEMS** launch their NEW AVENGERS releases with the first episode — leading to spurious claims that the series is being released entirely in chronological order, but more on that once we reach volume four...*

Volume One:
The Eagle's Nest/Last of the Cybernauts...?

The Eagle's Nest is a reasonably entertaining way to ease new viewers into the series, with the trio of John Steed, Mike Gambit and Purdey up against those staples of ITC adventure shows — leftover Nazis. Our heroes — and heroine, of course — are sent on the trail of the mysterious killers who have murdered an agent with a poison hooked fishing rod — one of the two really memorable images of the episode. They're soon led to a remote Scottish castle when a cryogenics expert, played in his usual form by Peter Cushing, is kidnapped. Brian Clemens' script has a few twists, but they are telegraphed more than usually, perhaps because the series was yet to find its feet.

The cryogenics angle of the story provides the remembered AVENGERS-style fantasy element, although it's really only a MacGuffin to allow a guest appearance by a familiar — and thoroughly predictable — villain... Patrick Macnee slips back into the Steed persona so well that he seems to be indistinguishable from the character of the Sixties; mind you, he did that in the Bond movie *A View To A Kill* as well! Joanna Lumley makes an instant impression as the unique Purdey, successfully combining the requisite action skills with a light touch that makes her every scene a joy throughout the series. You can probably tell that I'm drooling by now... Gareth Hunt, though sometimes criticised, isn't at all bad, but is clearly finding his feet in the role. Nevertheless, he fulfils the more macho (for want of a better word — this was the Seventies, after all) tasks required of him quite well. Also, he isn't nearly as wooden as he was in *Planet of the Spiders*. A strong guest cast helps the infant series enormously; in addition to the always reliable Peter Cushing we have a watchable pair of villains in the form of Derek Farr and Frank Gatliff, as well as a small but nice piece from Trevor Baxter as a ministry man.

The production values are high for the time, and film buffs may recognise the castle from *Highlander* standing in for the monastery. The only problems here are ones that beset the series as a whole — namely that the team crosses over the boundary into silliness with 'Germany's greatest treasure' but doesn't give in and go all the way, instead opting to try and treat the idea like an ordinary thriller. As a result, of course, the episode is not outrageous enough to attract a cult following, but is too fantastic to work as a straight thriller. This, and some slackly paced bits, aside, the episode is entertaining and well done. Oh, as for that second memorable image — that's the amusing closing shot, but I won't spoil it. Overall(7).

Last of the Cybernauts...? is Brian Clemens' sequel to the popular robotic episodes of the original series. The trio of agents are the focus of the hatred of an agent who was crippled in a car crash while escaping from them a year before. This man, Kane (chillingly played with dripping evil by Robert Lang) kidnaps Goff, one of the engineers who helped built the Cybernauts. Reactivating two of the robots, Kane kidnaps other cyberneticists with the intention of giving him a Cybernaut body with which to revenge himself upon Steed and Co. Although the episode does fit with AVENGERS continuity — one of the few instances in which continuity is mentioned in the show — it is a shame that Goff couldn't have been replaced by someone from one of the previous Cybernaut stories — not that there were many survivors of those! That said, Robert Gillespie does well as the trapped Goff. Oscar Quitak makes a memorable servant for the Davros-like Kane, almost seeming less sane than the main villain!

The regulars are now convincing as a team, and play well off one another, both in the drama stakes and in the lighter byplay. This episode does manage to recapture that delicate AVENGERS balance between the real and the fantastic pretty well, and the Cybernaut scenes are particularly impressive — especially the attack in which Steed is knocked unconscious at Turner Labs, and Gambit's stairwell fight with one of the robots. The climax is rather less impressive, though it is quite chilling when you realise how much of Kane's threats to Purdey are laced with sexual overtones. The manner of his final dispatch is quite amusing and leaves the way open for another story with the metal maniacs, though this never happened. Very good stuff.(9)

Volume Two: Sleeper/Target

Sleeper, by Brian Clemens, is one of the finest episodes in season one, despite a fairly total lack of fantasy elements. Here, London is put to sleep by a gang of criminals intent on doing what might be described as a bank crawl. The only three unaffected innocents, of course, are Steed, Gambit and Purdey. There isn't actually that much of a plot to speak of, since the episode mainly consists of the three trying to a)contact the others, b)find someone else who's awake and c)stop the gangsters from making off with their ill-gotten gains. Steed and Gambit both make good inroads in this latter area, but this is Joanna Lumley's show all the way. Patrick Macnee and Gareth Hunt both have mostly humorous scenes, even when disposing of gangsters — their antics at a bus stop and bench are hilarious. Joanna Lumley is put in the most danger, however, and so has the most dramatic scenes, though her impersonation of a shop-window dummy is also amusing. The action and tension are beautifully handled with good-quality film work from director Graeme Clifford, which more than makes up for a lack of recognisable guest stars — though the sharp-eyed can spot Prentis Hancock and Gavin Campbell among the gang. Ah well, that's life...(9)

Target! is the first non-Clemens episode of the bunch, being scripted by WHO and ITC stalwart Dennis Spooner. Here, the regulars are tested when the targets at their firing range learn to shoot back... This is mostly Gambit's episode, after both Purdey and Steed fall victim to Deep Roy's poisoned darts, and he is convincing in the scenes set in the testing ground. Plotwise, however, this is little more than a race against time, which is a staple of the genre. Lacking any fantasy elements beyond the surreal target range itself, this is simply a good old-fashioned action thriller with three personable stars and a bucket-load of guest actors — Roy Boyd, Robert Beatty, Keith Barron, Bruce Purchase and Frederick Jaeger (why wasn't he in *Last Of The Cybernauts...?*). Though not the best episode (all race-against-time stories are pretty much the same) nor is it the worst — it just doesn't grab you in the same way that the previous few episodes do. It's a good romp, though.(7)

Volume Three:
The Gladiators/Faces

The Gladiators is one of the last four episodes made (chronological order indeed!), and is one of the '*In Canada*'-subtitled shows, which means that there are no recognisable faces among the guest cast for a start. Perhaps Canadian readers...? Brian Clemens' script of Russian agents with super-skills seems to borrow something from the *Destroyer* series of novels which spawned the *Remo-Unarmed And Dangerous* movie, in terms of their ability to dodge bullets etc. Though unknown to me, Louis Zorich gives a hilariously pretentious performance as the gladiators' leader, Sminsky. That may sound bad, but he's the best thing in the story, having apparently judged the right tone to adopt. The plot is no great shakes — these ubermenschtypes want to break into the HQ of Canadian Intelligence and smash everything in sight — but the regulars conspire to make it all seem more interesting than it really is. Unfortunately, director George Fournier doesn't abet them and the episode is rather ponderous and dull, though it has its moments toward the end. Easily the worst of the four Canadian episodes, and by far and away the worst of the video releases so far.(4)

Faces by Brian Clemens makes this tape worthwhile. Here, people in Steed's department are being replaced by doubles recruited from a mission for down-

Steed's new partners, seen in March '76 — Joanna Lumley & Gareth Hunt (©The Fitzroy Source)

and-outs. Naturally, Gambit and Purdey decide to impersonate their own impersonators. This is hardly original, of course, but it does show off what a good actress Joanna Lumley can be when she takes up a couple of disguises. In comparison, Gareth Hunt is sadly out-acted by all concerned, as his own alter-ego consists purely of putting on a cod Irish accent. Top honours in the acting stakes, however, go to Patrick Macnee, whose double of Steed is on screen for far too short a time — anyone who thinks Macnee can't act and relies on his personality (the Roger Moore school of acting) obviously hasn't seen this. No reason is given as to why the criminals' hitman (Edward Petherbridge) uses a bow and arrow, but it doesn't matter. Purdey gets to do some nice high kicks, Steed is saved from certain death in a hopelessly clichéd manner, and nobody knows who's who. In short, this is standard adventure fare, but with decent acting. Richard Leech and voice artist David De Keyser lead the villains, while Michael Sheard has a cameo as yet another medical type. Despite using some of the standard trappings of the genre, the taut script and first rate acting make this a fine, if un-fantastical, example of the show.(8)

Volume Four: K is for Kill

This two-parter was the showcase for the French co-producers in season two of the series (so much for Video Gems' claim that THE NEW AVENGERS was being released in chronological order... Evidently not), and in many ways is an excellent example of the series, striking a neat balance between the outrageously fantastical elements of THE AVENGERS, and the slightly more realistic tone of the new series — a style which would eventually evolve into the more successful THE PROFESSIONALS.

The first episode, *The Tiger Awakes*, opens with the sort of bizarre events we all love from the original series — in this case a young Russian soldier mowing down a Salvation Army troop before ageing into a 78 year-old corpse. (This is possibly the series' best teaser.) Here we are finally given a bridge between the two AVENGERS series, in the form of two spliced-in clips of Diana Rigg from the original series, along with a previously unused film clip of Patrick Macnee from the same era — redubbed to fit the story. Being a French co-production, the New Avengers are transported to the French countryside before you can say Allo Allo, to face a horde of artificially preserved Russian troops attacking an empty chateau. And this is where the story displays both its greatest strength, and it its greatest weakness.

Brian Clemens' script is up to the job, providing a wonderfully B-movie-ish reason for these antiquarian antics, and the action is well handled, to some pounding music courtesy of Laurie Johnson — a sort of British Lalo Schifrin, if you like. Unfortunately, it does seem a bit repetitive when yet another Russian appears time and again to baffle the, er, impressive might of the French army. This is the weakness — the episode plays like a recruiting drive for the French army, and seems to have been written purely as an excuse to use some offer of assistance from them. The fact that the episode works as well as it does, however, is a testament to Clemens' skill and longtime experience with the series and its predecessor.

The second episode — *Tiger by the Tail* — is something of an improvement, though the SF element of the reason for the soldier's lack of ageing is brushed off with only an odd throwaway line. This episode is therefore more of a straight thriller/action show, but a very fine example of the genre. Here, two K agents have also been activated by the same mechanism as the soldiers, and are out to assassinate the French President. Due to a piece of neatly twisted logic, one of these young assassins is the father of the old man in charge of the project...

Although wittier and more intriguing than the previous episode, this one does have a nasty continuity problem. Our heroes discover that one K agent had a modern picture of his target when he has been in suspended animation for 30 years. They seem to make some deduction out of this, but somebody somewhere along the line forgot to pass it on to the viewers, as it's never adequately explained how he got that modern picture. It still doesn't quite manage to detract from the episode's superiority, however, and nor does the unintentionally funny idea that the K agents are so called because K stands for Kill in any language — it doesn't, of course, not even in French (the producers should have known better), or Russian.

In production terms, the story is well made, with fine direction and good effects and stunts. It does have its problems however. Why do these Russians, in hiding for 30 years, have a rag-bag of mismatched uniforms and equipment more suited to a defeated and depleted army instead of the new kit that one would expect of fresh recruits sent undercover? As for the idea that Steed could be shot on a balcony, from the ground, and have the bullet neatly centred in his cigarette case... Surely it would have ricocheted up his nose or something at that angle?

The guest actors are all well-fitted to the task, particularly Pierre Vernier as Col. Martin who, though wooden in part one, brightens up considerably in part two. Maurice Marsac's General Gaspard is a fine example of the typical AVENGERS eccentric transplanted to France. The regulars are very much on form, especially, as usual, Joanna Lovely — damn, Freudian slip. On a more trivial note, you may spot that Gambit and Purdey use the same radio props as THE PROFESSIONALS, except that they speak into the opposite side of it. One thing of particular note in the acting stakes is that, with a largely foreign cast, several voices are dubbed, albeit very, very well. Bond fans may note that Charles Millot, as the villainous Stanislav, IS recognisably dubbed by *Faces*' David De Keyser, who re-voiced Gabriel Ferzetti in OHMSS, for example. Overall, this is a fine pair of episodes, with the latter being the better of the two, and an excellent choice for video release (though I'd still have preferred a truly chronological sequence of releases). Part One rates a (7), while Part Two certainly deserves a (9). Overall, you ask? Let's split the difference and call it (8).

David A McIntee

Video Gems £10.99

SPACE: 1999

A Matter of Balance/ The Beta Cloud (ITC 8215)

IT IS the habit of fate to play tricks that turn mere chance into what appears, at first glance, to be the result of many hours of deliberate Machiavellian plotting. An example of which is the latest volume of SPACE: 1999 to find its way on to the shelves of video retailers. One can only guess at the thoughts of the average punter as they try to imagine what kind of pitiless inhuman beast would be as base and loathsome as to put *A Matter Of Balance* and *The Beta Cloud* on the same tape. But there has been no grandiose plot, no evil scheme to drag the viewer, kicking and screaming into the depths of despair; the pairing of these two nightmare episodes on the same tape is merely the result of the programme's original screening order.

Thus one embarks on this trip to the very shores of hell as the first scene of *A Matter Of Balance* opens with Tony Verdeshi assessing the results of his latest experiment in brewing beer on Alpha. He is assisted by Shermeen Williams, an attractive hydroponics expert, who has a crush on him. When the beer proves undrinkable Tony has a temper tantrum with his anger being directed at Shermeen. As usual SPACE:1999 demonstrates its ability to provide strong, intelligent and thought-provoking roles for its female guest stars, by having Shermeen, played by the late Lynne Frederick, rush out of mission control in a flood of tears. It's at this point where the plot kicks in as Shermeen begins to experience a series of ever more powerful visions of a being calling himself Vindrus. The most notable aspect of whom, apart from his Right Said Fred haircut, are his ever so short gold shorts, which like the plot leave nothing to the imagination. Vindrus uses Shermeen's immature emotions to his own advantage as he manipulates the girl into joining a landing party to the latest inhabitable planet the Moon is passing and guides her to a building guarded by a terrible monster...

It has to be said that *A Matter Of Balance* is not one of Pip and Jane Baker's better scripts (which is, I suppose, saying something!) as they seem to have written a story on the theme of anti-matter without any fixed notion as to what anti-matter is. Indeed the explanation given by Maya to Tony towards the end of the episode is based more on the theory of ying and yang rather than any scientific principle. Weak plot devices such as the use of the names Thead for the monster and Sunim for the planet, death and minus spelt backwards, are a little childish for a series supposedly aimed at an adult audience (not that this stopped Pip and Jane using the same principle for the Tetrap language) and the concept of backwards evolution in the anti-matter universe with Vindrus' race condemned to becoming apes then slime is more than a little bizarre.(3)

Unfortunately if *A Matter Of Balance* was poor *The Beta Cloud* can only be described as very, very poor indeed. Obviously a cost-cutting exercise this pedestrian tale takes place entirely on Alpha and uses no new sets or location filming. To give you some idea of the size of the budget this story is so cheap that the only person they could credit as a guest star is body builder Dave Prowse (credited as Dave Browse on the sleeve) who had the job of wearing the monster costume that week, part of which was used for Thead in the previous episode, and did not have a single line of dialogue. One could forgive cutting costs on the production side if it was not for the poor quality of the mindless, inane and generally crap script.

The story opens with a large number of Alpha's crew being knocked out on the arrival of a mysterious cloud in space thus reducing the number of actors being paid for the episode. Helena tells us that an Eagle has been sent up to investigate the cloud but it is missing and its pilot assumed dead. None of this is shown thus more money is saved on model work and hiring an actor for the Eagle pilot. The Eagle returns eventually but it is piloted by a hideous space monster who proceeds to reek havoc in the corridors (without doing any really expensive damage). A voice is then heard throughout Alpha purporting to emanate from the cloud. The voice demands the life support system from Alpha which is necessary to prevent it from dying. The monster is an agent of the cloud sent to collect the life support system. This begs the questions, how can the monster gather the hundreds of tons of air conditioning, water purification, waste disposal, heating, recycling, and hydroponics equipment that constitute Alpha's life support system and get it to the cloud in one piece and what use would it be to a space cloud anyway? But the cloud is far too enigmatic to answer such mundane questions. Upon being asked by Tony a simple question about who or what it is, it refuses to identify itself, replying, "Who we are is too complicated for your comprehension", which suggests that the writer could not even be bothered to think up a silly name for the cloud people.

Then follows forty minutes of Tony and Alphan semi-regular Bill Fraser being chased down corridor upon corridor by Dave Prowse as he attempts to discover the room with Life Support

written on the door. Attempt after attempt is made to destroy the creature but to no avail. But there are not enough corridors on Alpha to run down to fill an entire episode so five minutes are spent messing around with a laser in the middle of the episode to add a little variety. The whole thing is a farce with no thought put into it whatsoever. There are more holes in the script than polyester hairs on the monster especially when the problem of the creature is finally resolved. Also watch out for embarrassing scenes between Maya and Tony and the clumsy way their relationship is resolved at the end of the episode in order to avoid continuity problems in future. (2)

Anthony McKay

Debtor's Planet
by W.R. Thompson
(Pocket Books, £4.50)

ONE OF the more amusing aspects of the first season TNG episode *The Neutral Zone* was watching three cryogenically-frozen people from the 20th century adapt to the 24th century, especially Ralph Offenhouse, the obnoxious businessman who unfavourably compared the *Enterprise* to the *QE2*. Now, seven years later, Offenhouse is back on board the *Enterprise*, and he's a Federation Ambassador. That's right, an Ambassador.

Also making a return to the *Enterprise* is Cadet Wesley Crusher, on leave from Starfleet Academy and still very much feeling his wounds from *The First Duty*. While a noble effort on Mr. Thompson's part, Wesley's extreme remorse at lying to Captain Picard does not ring true — especially after Wesley's farewell in *Journey's End* — and simply doesn't work.

Picard and crew must take Ambassador Offenhouse to the planet Megara, which in a decade has gone from a pre-industrial society to one on the verge of interstellar travel. Megara has the Ferengi to "thank" for these advances, which have come at the expense of their society, industry, and freedom. Not surprisingly, the Megarans have become extremely xenophobic to all off-worlders as a result.

Ralph Offenhouse definitely makes *Debtor's Planet*; his brash, abrasive demeanour and past life uniquely qualifies him as the perfect specialist on the Ferengi, and his anachronisms account for most of the book's humour. For example, he programs the replicator for Cherry Coke and beverages containing real alcohol (which accidentally gets Counsellor Troi rip-roaring drunk — or should I say, "a severe case of alcohol poisoning," as Dr. Crusher does??), and falling asleep during one of Picard's long-winded lectures. But author Thompson instills a serious, darker side to Offenhouse, which makes him into a more credible character, not just some snide windbag.

The Ferengi are well-depicted in this novel — their use of "Debt!" as an expletive speaks volumes of their capitalist culture — even if they are only pawns in this game as well. Their true masters will come as little surprise. While *Debtor's Planet* is well-written, my only real complaint is that the action ends far too soon within the novel, which just limps for its last four chapters. (7)

John S. Hall

The Man in the Rubber Mask
by Robert Llewellyn
(Penguin Books, £4.99)

NOT BEING a great fan of autobiographies in general, the first thing that struck me about this book was that it is hardly an in-depth stroll through Robert Llewellyn's formative years, with emphasis being placed on the staple major landmarks of any individual's life; parents, school, first sexual experience etc.

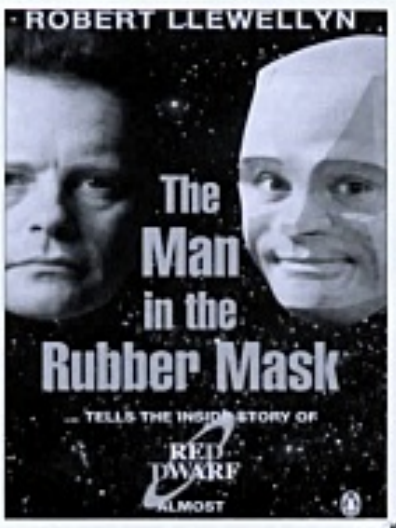
No Sireee, this book is an unashamed stroll through the period of Robert's life that has coincided with his head being covered in a lump of latex. No latex, no story. Well, almost....

While this shows a slavish devotion to his RED DWARF audience, who only want to know about the programme and nothing else, it does make me wonder how he seemingly struggled with his obvious desire to pepper the book with non-DWARF Llewellyn anecdotes (I say "obvious" as I'm sure nearly everyone given the same opportunity would have seized it with both hands).

It's not all rubber suits, hot studio lights and claustrophobia, though. Robert tells (with the pinch of salt that is every biographer's right) of his early pre-DWARF days rubbing shoulders with such luminaries as Simon Fanshawe (failed THAT'S LIFE presenter) and Arthur Smith (who once had an amusing incident with a pint of piss) during countless Edinburgh Festivals. What's more, he manages to tell his chosen stories in an amazingly original and amusing way. However, this section is annoyingly brief — presumably to leave more space for the RED DWARF material that the target audience are undoubtedly craving for.

The most in-depth and revealing section of the book tells of Llewellyn's casting as Kryten, his first costume fitting, and his first meeting with the cast and crew. Told from his perspective, it's startling and sobering to read his concerns — not only about his costume but about being the new member of an already established team. His speedy acceptance into the ranks bear testament to Llewellyn's personality and his account of this period is both serious and comic.

His stories detailing his memories of recording seasons three to five of RED DWARF are equally competent, witty, fascinating, and (I'm sure) probably libellous. It's Llewellyn's insight into the various people he has worked with on the programme that makes this book the delight it undoubtedly is. Craig Charles is portrayed as a chain-smoking, debauched party animal, Chris Barry a car-mad, one-man, money-making cottage industry, whilst Danny John-Jules seems totally obsessed with what other people (usually Pavarotti) are earning. His detailing of his initial reserve at joining an already established trio is absorbing, although unsurprising. However, before very long, he becomes "one of the lads" and describes in jolly detail the sort of japes, jokes and jinks that they all got up to.



Llewellyn also waxes lyrically about the making of the ill-fated American pilot for RED DWARF — how he was prevented from telling the English cast of his invitation to make the show without them, how he felt about signing a six-year contract, how he felt about the American cast and crew, and how Rob Grant and Doug Naylor were eventually banned from the set.

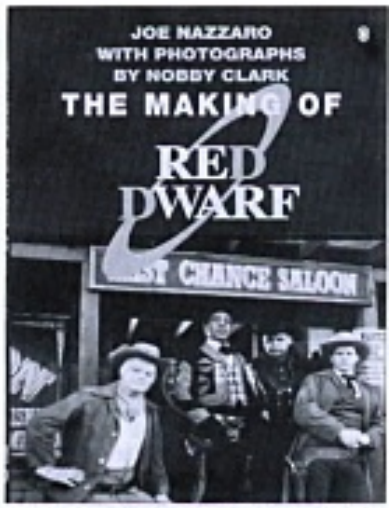
Unfortunately, the book stops with the making of the American pilot. It practically begs the reader to wonder what frictions his casting created with the English cast once it were known (he laughingly passed himself off as "scum" for taking the role when I interviewed the cast, and there was a detectable degree of deep disappointment amongst the other three that they had not been given the opportunity to accompany Robert in the states). It also fails to even mention RED DWARF VI, which I'm sure would have been equally controversial due to the cast's growing dissatisfaction with what was perceived as tortuous production schedules. All of which leads me to assume the book has been sitting around for about a year between writing and publication.

Another curious omission from the book were anecdotes and tales of Hattie Hayridge — the fifth regular of the team during the timescale of this book. Although admittedly not "one of the lads", you would be excused for thinking her role in Llewellyn's perception of RED DWARF was incredibly small, as she barely gets a mention throughout the book — the American cast even manage to fare better.

It is a credit to Llewellyn's memory that so much of what he has written about is totally new (this is either a sad indictment on the state of RED DWARF fandom, or shows that he's made it all up), and I will not be tempted in using that old reviewer's standby of repeating the more amusing bits to pad out this piece. I'll just finish by saying that even if you don't particularly like RED DWARF, the book will leave you suitably entertained by the last page. If, however, you like the programme, you'll love this book. Read it. Better still, buy it.(9)

The Making of Red Dwarf
by Joe Nazzaro, photos by Nobby Clarke (Penguin books, £7.99)

ONCE upon a time in DWB, the venerable reviewer Andrew Pixley used the words "A picture book for smegheads everywhere" as his opening gambit when summing up the publication *The Official Red Dwarf Companion*. What a shame this wonderful expression has already been snapped up, as it would just as easily have worked as a leader for this article. Somehow "A picture book for smegheads everywhere II" hasn't got the same punch, neither has "Yet another picture book...."



As Making of... books go, I'm afraid that this book fails in nearly every imaginable aspect, irrespective of your criteria for wanting to read it. As a book that tries to show how a TV programme of any description is made, it fails to cover the subject in any significant depth, while it is also inexcusably brief in its treatment of RED DWARF itself.

The cover of this large-format book should give all potential purchasers some indication of the contents — a garish mix of the bland and the tacky. Using the same yucky shade of purple as Primordial Soup, a rather lonely-looking logo and a badly pasted picture from *Gunmen of the Apocalypse*, the book almost screams out for a dash of originality. At least the cover for the afore-mentioned *The Official Red Dwarf Companion* looked interesting enough. The book starts with the now obligatory forward by Grant Naylor (if you don't know who this is, then I'm not going to explain, and why are you reading this review anyway?), and is followed by a brief explanation of the general gist of the series' history up to RED DWARF VI.

The book only concentrates on the sixth season of the show, and centres primarily on the story *Gunmen of the Apocalypse*. Fair enough, I suppose, as any season of RED DWARF is made along the same lines as any other given season. However, as a book that proclaims to explain how the show is made, it short-changes its audience by concentrating totally on just one story. OK, it's fine to use the making of a particular story to illustrate any points you wish to make — as other Making of... books have done in the past — but to concentrate totally on one story only is a bit limiting.

However, I do have a particular soft spot for *Gunmen*, as I was fortunate enough to be able to attend the rehearsals and recording of this particular episode (as readers of DWB probably know). "OK, book", I said to myself as I opened it to begin reading, "let's see what you can tell me about this episode that I didn't know already".

Well, it starts off with a lot of attention being paid to the location shooting at the Laredo Western Club — lots of good photographs and lots of anecdotes about mud. Then we move

All-Consuming Fire

By Andy Lane (Virgin books, £4.99)

YOUR EDITOR, dear reader, has a disturbing knack of coercing me into parading my literary ignorance in public. Firstly, he invites me to review *Deceit*, forcing me to admit that I have never followed Marvel Publications' DOCTOR WHO comic strips. Now, much more shamefully, I must confess that prior to reading Andy Lane's *All-Consuming Fire*, I had not experienced a single word of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories or even watched a frame of film or videotape of his most famous creation come to life (even when played by our very own Tom Baker). But then, everyone has to start somewhere, and I was relieved to discover Andy Lane's first solo NEW ADVENTURE to be an excellent starting point.

Why "relieved" you may wonder? Well — I've always been a little wary of members of successful double acts when they strike out on their own. Epic, rich, and captivating as *Lucifer Rising* - Lane's earlier collaboration with Jim Mortimore - had been, at times it left me a little muddled as to precisely which character was which, and what his or her relationship was to him or her or this or that. Mortimore's solo follow-up, *Bloodheat*, was less self-involved and far more gratuitous. I've been thoroughly mocked for my glowing eulogy to it in DWB, but still defend it on the grounds that it's one of the handful of NEW ADVENTURES that I can still summarise from memory. Therefore a good story, straightforwardly told. That was Jim off the book, so would Andrew Lane turn out to be the Andrew Ridgely of the act? Thankfully not. So perhaps *Lucifer*'s few shortcomings can be attributed to it being designed by a committee.

From the outside *All-Consuming Fire* continues the recent trend of the books to be better packaged and presented. The re-appearance of a table of contents, which disappeared back around *The Dimension Riders*, would be welcome, but the standard of jacket illustration (you expect me to use a phrase like 'cover artwork' in a review of a Sherlock Holmes book!?) continues the improvement that began immediately after the infantile daubings that surrounded *No Future*. The author told me that he was hoping that Virgin would commission some interior illustrations (figures, plates, take your pick...) in the style of Sidney Paget in the Strand Magazine, which less ignorant students of popular culture tell me is where the exploits of Holmes and Watson first appeared. Having now done a little homework, I can see that the style of Mike Nicholson's drawings is not identical to Paget's, but it does at least suggest it, aided by the provision of captions culled from the text. It looks like being a long haul, but what with this and the multitude of archaeological periphera included in last month's *Theatre of War*, I think we're finally moving away from linear monoliths of serial text towards a more interesting form of multi-media-esque DOCTOR WHO novel.

That's enough trend analysis. What about the new addition to the range? I was delighted to discover that *All-Consuming Fire* is itself a book within a book. In the prologue, the Doctor presents Ace and Bernice each with a copy of *All-Consuming Fire*, a volume which purports to be from the reminiscenses of Doctor John Watson, themselves transcribed by some shadowy Doyle figure. So, a few pages after opening Lane's *All-Consuming Fire*, we, or rather our time-travelling friends, open Watson's.

A neat way of reconciling two resonant but hard-to-interface fictional worlds also yields the single best thing about the book — the majority of it is delivered in the first person (in this case the aforementioned Watson). This is, if you will, a double narrative whammy. I first encountered the Doctor in print a quite unbelievable twenty-one years ago with the Target range's first DOCTOR WHO book — the reprint of David Whitaker's *Doctor Who and the Daleks*. Ian Chesterton's recounting of his abduction to Skaro by a man constantly ahead of him intellectually, yet emotionally frail and unpredictable, and his subsequent adventures haunts me to this day. The TV series' central feature of a mystery man whose thoughts we cannot ever be privy to, coupled with the fanatical desire of writers to separate him from his travelling companions whenever possible, has rendered the journalistic approach to storytelling a rarity seldom (in fact, only by the witty and charming Donald Cotton) attempted since. I am ecstatic to see it return since it imposes a coherency and consistency that simply cannot be rivalled by the filmic style of cutting from one point of view to the next and back. I'm not saying that it will always produce a better book, but it undoubtedly reduces the risk of producing a bad one.

The other great thing about letting Watson tell the story is that the verbiage is so much richer than an imaginary observer would use to a contemporary reader. So instead of having descriptions such as "Holmes' study was gaslit, heavily furnished, and tended to burgundies and mahogany like so many of the rooms of writers and artists of the 1890s", we get the much richer and evocative use of the language of the time, which serves to remind us much more constantly of the period and people than constant historical interjections would.

Lest you gain the impression that Lane's straightforward storytelling here means a simple story, let me point out that the plot is as interesting as any, and hooked me immediately with a vignette of Holmes and Watson having their holiday on the Orient Express interrupted by a Papal request to return to London and investigate a theft from a secret Vatican library in the capital. Along the way, the Doctor turns up, people start spontaneously combusting, and we get a delightful view of the haves and have-nots of the society of the day. It's not quite the tongue-in-cheek Victorian London of *The Talons of Weng-Chiang*, perhaps resembling more that of *Birthright*.

Similarities to *Birthright* continue in Ace's whereabouts — she's been sent off on another reconnaisance mission by the Doctor before the story begins. At the rate the authors seem to be sidelining her in an effort to concentrate on Bernice, who one can reasonably speculate they find more interesting to write for, it looks as though she's departing from the series with more of a whimper than the characteristic bang I had been so anticipating. The authors are not alone in their fascination for the inebriate archaeologist — Dr. Watson develops something of a crush on her too. You can see his point. At this strage some of the narrative shifts to Bernice's diary lending glorious perspective to the situation.

The meeting of two of fiction's more eccentric geniuses is predictably entertaining (although followers of them both will enjoy it all the more, one suspects). It appears that Holmes would dearly like to punch the Doctor in the face for firstly arriving as an outsider in his deductive view of the world and disrupting the completeness of his problem-solving theorem of humanity, and secondly, for just being even more clever and irritating than himself. You can see his point, too. Followers of Holmes may also be pleased to see that Professor Moriarty, and Mycroft put in appearances, too.

I was enjoying it all so much that I

actually purchased *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* before finishing the book. Hence my slight disappointment that the narrative left London for the equally interesting, but understandably less fog-shrouded and barrow-boy-infested India. Not to worry. We move on again fairly sharply for the alien locale where Ace has been despatched. There's a final twist in the end, which I won't spoil (although readers of Wells' *The Time Machine* may be reminded of it's narrator waiting for the time traveller to return at it's conclusion). One clue to the book's initial mystery of how books can be smuggled from the Library of St. John the Beheaded may be found in the chapter titles of *No Future*. And that's all the help you're getting!

The main strength of *All-Consuming Fire* is its sticking with a limited number of characters and situations and exploring them fully, rather than flitting from idea to idea. It doesn't have the feel of a number of the NEW ADVENTURES which are demonstrably 'first novels', where the authors seem desperate to cram all their ideas and insights between one pair of covers lest the opportunity to do so does not present itself again (charity forbids me from making the obvious and cruel aside you may expect to read here....). In comparison with *Lucifer Rising*, it's easier to visualise and follow. And, whereas in the case of the former I had already read all of the Arthur C. Clarke novels that (allegedly) inspired it, this time round I have the world of Conan Doyle to explore, waiting on my bookshelf as I write. For that alone, (9).

(I'd love to read a review by a Holmes fan who'd never read a DOCTOR WHO book before, though...)

Dave Owen

on to the studio rehearsals and recording, again illustrated with some nice photos. However the text is pretty sparse — big type and triple word spacing — and is very rarely informative.

As each day in the production week is discussed in turn, you get the idea that the author could have easily written the text simply by referring to production notes, by having a rudimentary knowledge of how television is made, and by grabbing the cast and crew occasionally for the odd quote. Not that I'm suggesting that the author never actually shadowed this production, but he does go on to describe in very basic detail the events in a studio that at the time contained only the four cast, the Director, the Producer, a couple of scenery fitters, myself and my girlfriend. I swear there was no-one else!!

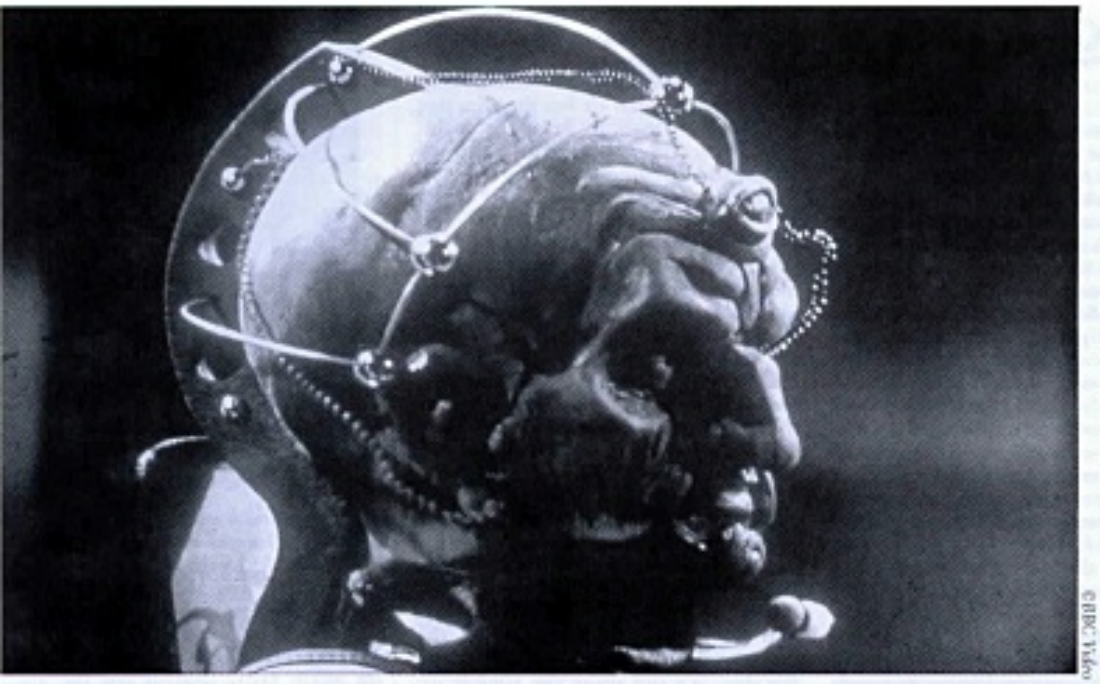
Apart for the stunning photos (Nobby Clarke is credited, just under the authors name, as photographer — he should have got a bigger credit than Mr Nazzaro, as his contribution to the finished product is far more significant) there is a great set plan of the permanent Starbug set on studio G at Shepperton (so that's what was behind those drapes) plus a few dodgy pages of script (that seem to have been re-typed for some reason). The book ends with a section that is basically a checklist of RED DWARF merchandise — strangely no mention of the defunct *Smegazine*.

However if you were a reader of that noble publication before its untimely demise, it's likely that you will find nothing new in this book, apart from the photos — and lets face it, RED DWARF VI photos are hardly hard to come by — and the occasional titbit of trivial trivia. You will probably also know the name Joe Nazzaro, and would rightly expect something better.

So did I find the book informative? Well, I've read through enough "Robert Llewellyn gets made up as Kryten" articles to last a lifetime, I know the basics behind television production, and I know nearly everything there is to know about RED DWARF VI. If, however, you think your knowledge of any of the above needs expanding, then you might consider purchasing this book (or alternatively read DWB119).

If anything, it treats its subject matter in a more basic and cursory tone than I would have thought possible, and with a total lack of enthusiasm or originality. Although I would give 8 out of 10 for the photos, the text only really warrants 2, giving a grand total of.....(5)

Richard Molesworth



SURRENDERING TO DESTINY

IF, A FEW YEARS AGO, one had asked the average fan their opinion of *Destiny of the Daleks*, one would almost certainly have been met with derision. That the Daleks are debased by the levity of it all, David Gooderson's Davros is rubbish, the Romana regeneration is a mockery, Tim Barlow can't act, and that the overall production is generally shoddy are all criticisms that have been levelled against the story. But fandom is a fickle beast, and fortunately the recent positive swing of opinion towards the Graham Williams era has helped to balance these contemporary criticisms, many of which now seem petty and even unfounded.

If any part of *Destiny* deserves criticism then it's the script which is, it has to be said, nothing very special — but then it's not particularly poor either. Nation's scripts were very rarely innovative and are usually characterized by cliché, with one-dimensional characters going through the motions in stereotyped situations. However, Terry Nation's undoubted skill as a writer was in structuring his material well enough that it never seemed dull at the time, merely uninspiring in retrospect. Thus while *Planet of the Daleks* or its even more terrible twin, *Death to the Daleks*, could never be classics, they are full of action, spread out over a number of weeks and sandwiched between stronger stories. In other words, they serve to keep the general audience happy. In terms of its plot construction, *Destiny* is no diversion from such standard Terry Nation fare, featuring all his usual elements: radiation sickness; the "surprise" cliffhanger appearance of the Daleks; the Doctor and companion separated early on, with the latter then stalked by something which inevitably proves to be an ally; and, of course, the "Don't Judge by Appearances" moral.

Fortunately, however, there are several things that help to elevate this script above the familiar old runaround, the first being that the story itself is somewhat more unusual. Just for once, Nation presents us with a script in which the Daleks aren't embarked on some fiendish plan to enslave some planet or galaxy with some super weapon or deadly plague, but are instead embroiled in their own fight for survival against another race of megalomaniacal mechanicals. TV21 did this almost every week in the sixties, but this is new territory for the TV series and as such adds interest (although the Movellans could not be said to be particularly memorable). Of course to compensate for this unusual omission Nation does provides some clichéd slave workers for the Daleks to subjugate (garbed in an array of old costumes which allow the more trivia-orientated fan hours of fun playing spot the story!), but their contribution is thankfully kept to a minimum as only David Yip plays his scene with much conviction. Admittedly, all that the slave workers are meant to do is stagger around like aimless zombies, and I suppose that the extras do this very well, but this is inevitably rather dull for the viewer.

Another element which gives the script extra frisson is the return of Davros (at a time, please remember, when such re-appearances were infrequent enough to be novel), even if this touch of nostalgia is not as well handled as it might have been. Let's quietly ignore the idea that Davros could believably have been left sitting peacefully in the bunker for a few thousand years totally undisturbed — obviously Daleks don't do a lot of cleaning — and instead move on swiftly to the actual characterisation, both of the writer and the actor. David Gooderson has come in for a lot of criticism over the years, and this I feel is unfair — a case of blaming the symptom and not the root cause. True, Gooderson lacks the compelling delivery of Michael Wisher and what I shall tactfully call the 'passion' of Terry Molloy, but he copes adequately with inadequate material. I've always suspected that the success of the Davros of *Genesis* had more to do with Robert Holmes' talent as a script editor than Nation's skills as a writer, and *Destiny* rather seems to confirm this as what was previously a complex character, written in shades of grey rather than totally black, is reduced to another boring, ranting megalomaniac. One only has to compare the Doctor's scenes with Davros from *Genesis* with those in *Destiny* to see the difference in the quality of writing; whereas in *Destiny* the writer is content for Davros merely to shout that "the Daleks will rule the universe", in *Genesis* the audience were given some insight into why Davros believed that they should. However this is Season 17; there's enough wit around to help compensate for this rather dull return and Tom Baker's manic drive helps carry the scenes, but one's still disappointed by the wasted opportunity.

What really raises this script above the average is the production, particularly Ken Grieve's direction and Ken Ledsham's sets. The location work falls into the standard Doctor Who cliché of a quarry, but Grieve actually makes something of this usual limitation, being fortunate in having the use of a steadycam allowing some very smooth and flowing camera work. Thus the scenes of Romana being followed in the first episode (in particular) are imbued with a voyeuristic sense of menace, while not having to rely on static shots provides the location work in general with movement and interest. Whatever deficiencies the script might have, it does have momentum, and this kind of slick direction is precisely what the story needs and which so many similar Nation stories never got (*Death to the Daleks* — also quarry-based — being a good example). The studio work is equally well handled, and here Ledsham's sets really do help. They are all striking designs — from the bright white hi-tech Movellan spaceship to the shadowy Dalek control rooms — but what really makes the difference is that they all have ceilings. Not only does this add extra depth and realism to the designs, but it also allows Grieve to make good use of low-angle shots. This is particularly effective with regard to the Daleks, as it increases their menace and helps them to dominate the audience rather more so than if they had been shot at normal level. Particularly striking in this respect is the cliffhanger to episode one, where the eerie green lighting, the polished black walls, and the increasing whine of the mysterious drilling all build up nicely to the Daleks bursting through the wall. (Of course, there's no logical reason why the Daleks should come bursting through the wall, just as there was no logical reason for one to take a swim in the Thames fifteen years earlier, but its certainly dramatic!)

Incidental music is used unusually sparingly - and is absent altogether from episode four - and it is hardly missed. The sound of the drilling and the desolate wind noise that howls throughout the surface scenes of Skaro (a nice piece of unobtrusive continuity with *The Daleks*) provides most of the atmosphere Grieve needs, and the lack of a constant score is hardly noticed. When music is used — for the revival of Davros or Agella, for instance — it punctuates the moment all the more effectively.

Despite this good production, however, there are still some problems. The performance of the guest cast is not particularly memorable with the prime culprit being Tim Barlow's Tyssan — here at least I agree with the story's detractors. It's perhaps not PC of me to criticize an actor for a rather listless intonation of his lines when — as has been widely reported over the years — he had hearing difficulties, but criticize I must. In its defence I could offer the suggestion that — as with the other slave-workers — he is playing the part of a malnourished, exhausted prisoner with particular realism, but I doubt that anyone would be convinced. Similarly uninspiring are the Movellans — a race of impassive, logical humanoid robots is never particularly memorable for the viewer, although June Hudson's striking costume design leaves a good visual impression, particularly the bizarre string wigs (logical the Movellans may be, but they do like their fashion accessories!).

But what of the Daleks themselves, so often criticized for their tacky appearance? This has always seemed to me to be a particularly petty criticism, as generally you have to pedant to spot it for there is so much that is good in the story's visuals to distract from the occasional chipped casing. Out of the four episodes there are perhaps only three moments when Grieve makes a major mistake, and they really are of the "Blink and you'll miss it" variety. Of course, once you know what they are, they stand out like the proverbial sore thumb, but that is true of almost every Doctor Who story and besides, it wasn't made for fans to scrutinize on video. Generally speaking the Daleks are Daleks, and if they fail to convince (and I don't think that they do any more than usual) it's because their concept is beginning to get a little passe, not because the execution is poor. (Just to spoil the future viewing of anyone who hasn't spotted these cock-ups: in episode three, in the very last shot of Davros, the top of the last of the following Daleks lifts as it starts to move; in episode four the Dalek standing behind Davros as the others leave for the Movellan spaceship is obviously a dummy, having no balls attached to the casing; and similarly in episode four

Destiny of the Daleks
July 4th, £11.99

one shot of the dummy Daleks on location is too close and too long to be wholly convincing.)

One final point worth commenting on is the second Romana; *Destiny* is, after all, her first story. In interviews, Lalla Ward has always expressed dissatisfaction with *The Creature from the Pit* (the third story of the season, but the first to be recorded) on the grounds that the writing was all wrong. This is clearly true, as in that story Romana retains the icy aloofness of Mary Tamm without the schoolgirl effervescence that Lalla Ward brought to the part. However this ice maiden image, even though not balanced by the character's subsequent charm, was still appropriate behaviour in as much as the character never totally lost her earlier attributes. *Destiny* (the third story to be shot thus allowing Ward to have settled into the part) gives the actress a far rougher deal since the character is weaker, becoming just another screamer who follows the standard path of the female companion (separated from the Doctor, menaced, captured, rescued, separated, captured, rescued etc.). When viewed in the context of the latter stories, the scene of Romana screaming her head off during the Dalek interrogation is just as incongruous as the Doctor doing so would be! As June Hudson's wonderful pastiche of the Doctor's costume signposts, this Doctor-companion relationship is a team of equals, but one wouldn't think so from Nation's script. But never mind! Ward copes admirably, as always, and the script does allow her a few memorable moments: the regeneration, while galling for the fans, is entertaining for the general public, effecting the change-over with a minimum of fuss; Command Sharrel quite literally goes to pieces after a round with her in episode four; and she does deliver a final witty put down to the Doctor in the very last scene. It's simply a pity that the general public wouldn't really get to see the character at her best until *City of Death*, and as a debut story *Destiny* could have offered more.

When I started this review I said that I liked this story, but I seem instead to have spent most of my time knocking it. It's certainly a difficult story to review even-handedly. The problem with *Destiny* is that it's a an average script done well — not perfectly, but well enough to make a good impression. As such it's a frustrating story, as one is always aware that — even though the good still outweighs the bad — with just a little more work on the script and attention to detail on the production it might have been classic. As it is, though, *Destiny* is a solidly entertaining four episodes of WHO which keeps the audience's attention to the end. And not every story can claim that.(7)

John Molyneau

NATIONAL TREASURE?

TERRY NATION is a very lucky man. Very few writers have managed to create a monster which has rocketed a programme into the dizzy heights of fame and fortune, delighting audiences and accountants alike. Since the creation of the Daleks many DOCTOR WHO writers have hoped that their little contribution to the series would prove to be "the next big thing", but few other creations have proved commercially viable — Kit Pedler and Gerry Davis reaped little commercial success, and despite all the BBC's efforts the Quarks never quite caught on. Even Nation failed to repeat his success with the Mechanoids.

In those early days of DOCTOR WHO, the Daleks were just what were needed to ensure the series' commercial and ratings success, and this remained the case until the Seventies, when the audience's focus shifted to its stars — Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker, who ironically won the series an American popularity that had eluded the Daleks themselves. And even then, an occasional appearance by the Daleks did the series no harm...

And so, a succession of production teams employed Terry Nation solely so they could secure the rights to the Daleks, not so as to exploit his fertile imagination. Shrewdly, Nation had ensured that he had first refusal on all Dalek stories. Was this greed? A writer's fee being better than a one off payment of royalties? No. Terry Nation knew and cared for his creations, and didn't want to see them mistreated. By the early Seventies Terry Nation didn't need to work for DOCTOR WHO — he had established himself as a writer and editor of ITC series, and was much in demand as a source of fantasy ideas, particularly at the BBC.

Except at DOCTOR WHO. They only wanted Daleks, so Terry - with just two exceptions - only submitted Dalek material. Nation once compared his plight in resurrecting the Daleks to Conan Doyle's predicament after the death of Sherlock Holmes. But whereas Conan Doyle found it hard to accept that the Strand were only interested in Holmes, and that the public neglected his historical romances, Nation had no objection to falling back on DOCTOR WHO, the show which had made his fortune but contributed little to his career. That would still have progressed had WHO been cancelled in 1964.

©BBC Video

Many WHO fans dismiss him as an unimaginative plodder, describing his Dalek stories as un-imaginative, pedestrian and tired. The same criticism has been made of his contributions to BLAKE'S 7, particularly when they are compared to those of Chris Boucher and Robert Holmes. Yet witness the freshness, the humour and the pace of his contributions to ITC series such as THE PERSUADERS!

But what of his other work for the BBC? Terry Nation (like Dennis Spooner) knew how to tailor his work to both film and video, writing to the emotional and physical levels required. In the former, in series such as THE PERSUADERS!, he could indulge (Danny) Wilde flights of fancy out of place in DOCTOR WHO; in the latter, he could explore the doomladen subjects that so fascinated him in real depth.

Of course, it was in DOCTOR WHO that Nation hinted at his serious side. The Daleks, and later the Federation, gave Nation the chance to explore his fascination with fascism, the mutant cyborgs taking that philosophy to its ultimate extreme. In each Nation/Dalek story they were portrayed as ruthless, powerful, in-conquerable and single-minded. He saw them on that level and that level only, and we can imagine his dismay when David Whitaker altered that concept in his two fourth season classics.

There is no way that such a xenophobic race would feign subservience, chanting "I am your servant", even when deprived of the ability to kill. Terry Nation wrote his own take on the subject when he disarmed them for *Death to the Daleks*; and they remained arrogant and threatening, unequivocal that they were still superior, regardless of the quirks of circumstance (they still found their own way around the power loss caused by the City of the Exxilons). As Dennis Spooner put it in *The Daleks' Master Plan*: "One Dalek is capable of exterminating all."

When Nation's Daleks make pacts, their allies are quickly dispensed with. His Daleks used the most destructive weapons available. Other races are subjugated and enslaved, all attacks are considered unprovoked. They use only the crude, dehumanised language of the humans they echo.

A second theme to resurface throughout Nation's BBC work is his fear of technology running out of control, to turn upon mankind. The Exxilon city is the pinnacle of that race's achievements but reduced them to savages worshipping their own creation. An inverted war of attrition is shown in *Genesis of the Daleks*, and *The Keys of Marinus* shows (if only briefly) the runaway effects of accelerated plant growth in the screaming jungle. BLAKE'S 7 also touched upon this theme, most notably in *Deliverance*, but also when Zen's self-will made him an unreliable ally for the Seven in the early episodes...

The repetition of these themes would be less intrusive were they not accompanied by a repetition of plot devices. As early as Nation's *The Keys of Marinus*, the brains of Morphoton hark back to the Daleks, while *Planet of the Daleks* is almost a rewrite of their first appearance. Nation was also fond of 'beauty and the beast' scenarios — the hideous malformed creature stalking the Doctor's companion is rarely so nasty in either looks or intentions as first appears... Alydon and Vaber, Bellal, Sevrin and Tyssan bear witness to this.

Unfortunately, the plot structure of Nation's DOCTOR WHO scripts became almost formulaic, tried and tested ideas redressed for variety. After landing, the Doctor and his companions will be split up... yet the point of this separation is obvious. Other writers try to introduce their creations regardless, on their

David Jackson (Gan) and Gareth Thomas (Blake) © BBC Video

own. Yet this leaves the audience to watch characters for whom they as yet care nothing, who can explain nothing to the viewers unless they tell each other things they should already know. And, at base, the audience have tuned in to watch DOCTOR WHO — the Doctor and his companions. To include them in each scene helps lead the audience into the plot, avoiding the long, long establishing sequences (however well written) seen in THE NEW ADVENTURES, and stories such as *Meglos* and *Revelation of the Daleks*.

This approach to character introduction is best seen in *Genesis of the Daleks*. It is only once the Doctor and Harry have been introduced to General Ravon, and to Nyder, and heard a rousing speech about how the Kaleds will wipe the Thals off the face of Skaro that we see the only scene in the episode to feature only subsidiary characters. After which, in the second episode, as the viewers become comfortable with the situation, the supporting characters can begin to carry their share of the plot.

This formulaic approach, which also extends to the characters, makes it easy to see the script editor's influence on Nation's work. Sometimes this works: it would be hard to assess David Whitaker's influence on Nation's early scripts, but their success is undoubted; Donald Tosh's work on his anaemic scripts for *The Daleks' Master Plan* ensured the result was a classic, as did Robert Holmes' contributions to *Genesis of the Daleks*, a script which stemmed from Barry Letts' comment: "It's a very good story, Terry, but you've sold it to us three times already!" On other occasions it's less successful: Douglas Adams' attempts to introduce his own brand of humour to *Destiny of the Daleks* clash horrendously with Nation's attempts at menace. It's instructive here to consider Nation's work with Dennis Spooner, a man with whom he shared a mutual regard, exchanging commissions whenever possible. Spooner admired Nation's ability to see the story as a whole, making everything essential. It was impossible to cut anything from a Nation script (an observation Donald Tosh would probably echo, though for rather different reasons!)

The Pertwee era probably shows Nation's work for DOCTOR WHO in its purest form. If we take *Death to the Daleks* as a classic example of his work, we can see clearly his approach. The basic plot came from Terrance Dicks, and was later amended by Robert Holmes. Nation simply wrote the script in his usual dry style, making no major changes or additions to the story, like a craftsman following a design. The deep subtexts to *Genesis of the Daleks* were Robert Holmes' responsibility: Nation saw DOCTOR WHO as an exciting adventure programme, not a forum for political debates or DOOMWATCH-like investigations into ethics and morality. For under-currents of that sort, we must look to BLAKE'S 7, where he applied such techniques to episodes like *Bounty*.

NATION CREATED and wrote exclusively for BLAKE'S 7's first season. True, Chris Boucher eased the pressures on Nation, expanding and rewriting his material, but he adhered strictly to Nation's storylines, and while their approach to the series differed, there was no personality clash to match that which occurred on SURVIVORS. Nation liked to keep BLAKE'S 7 simple, leaving one to look for the sub-text of depth beneath. Paul Darrow admires Terry Nation greatly, recalling that the writer allowed him to develop Avon in accordance with his own feelings, accepting that the actor comes to know far more about the character than the writer — a view Chris Boucher disputes. This simple approach no doubt stems from his experience of working at ITC, and it's undoubtedly the case that his outline of the BLAKE'S 7 title sequences smacks of ITC...

But while Nation's vision of the Federation might have been simpler than that eventually seen (as Daleks-on-legs so evil that Blake would appear the undoubted "True figure of good", a freedom fighter who could never be a terrorist when compared to them), he was perfectly willing to draw upon contemporary society in outlining them. Just as Syria sent a peace-keeping force into the Lebanese civil war during the mid-Seventies, so the Federation plan to do the same on the planet Lindor — having first created a situation where the populace will welcome one.

Nation's plots are driven by action, and his approach to characterisation arises from this. He had little time for the personality cult later to dominate the series, and his scripts leave no room for characters to sit back and reflect on the morality of their actions — instead, events force their affairs towards a resolution. A good example of this can be seen in *Countdown*, when Avon meets the brother of the girlfriend he believes dead, who predictably holds Avon responsible for that death. Rather than resolve this story separately to the main plot, Nation makes them defuse their conflict as they race to defuse the huge bomb, ticking towards the destruction of the planet. And yet, the characterisation which resulted was such that Darrow often recalls that some STAR TREK actors preferred BLAKE'S 7 to their own series.

In view of how SURVIVORS developed, Nation's memory of the series is understandably hostile. This classic series once again embraces the Nation question of what happens when the technology runs out, but rather than place the struggle against nature in a fictional background he bases it in the here and now. Jenny, Greg and Abby trek through the countryside facing threats from gangs of humans obeying their base instincts for survival, and from Wormley's neo-fascist Government. But this most immediate presentation of the classic Nation themes was subverted by Terence Dudley and Jack Ronder, who ensured that the group settle down to meet other people anxious to help. When a Nation script came round again, he introduced gunmen desperate for survival and the few commodities which might ensure it. By comparison, Ronder and Dudley's version of the programme would always seem too cosy, despite their regular culling of the supporting cast.

Outside of these three 'big' series, the BBC employed Nation's talents on many other programmes. He adapted Ira Levin's masterpiece *A Kiss Before Dying* for BBC2, skilfully translating this tale of a man who murders his way through a family before meeting his own spectacular death at a steel works. For OUT OF THE UNKNOWN he adapted Ray Bradbury's *The Fox and the Forest*, and, years before Robert Holmes proposed a Jago and Litefoot spin-off, he wrote the pilot of a victorian SF series called THE INCREDIBLE ROBERT BALDICK.

Baldick, played by Robert Hardy, was a rational scientist who investigated the paranormal. The pilot episode, eventually produced by Anthony Coburn for the PLAYHOUSE series, dealt with the murder of a servant girl found stabbed at an ancient burial site. The locals fear demonic possession, but when a priest attempts exorcism he is foiled by sheets

SURVIVORS *Greg Preston — An archetypal Nation character (©BBC Video)*

of flame which threaten to burn him alive, an attack he interprets as evidence of his weakening faith. Investigating, Baldick finds himself encased in sheafs of cobwebs, in a manner which recalls his childhood terror when he was locked in a closet. The site has stored the fear of generations of locals, and directs that energy back at interlopers, stimulating the intruders own great fears...and once he resolves the problem Baldick finds evidence of the visitors responsible for this legacy of terror... Alongside a neanderthal skull he unearths an object which mystifies him, but which resembles a communicator...evidence that aliens visited to prehistoric Earth.

That this was never developed into a series is a great loss, particularly as Robert Hardy's performance is all that one would expect of such a great actor. It would be too much to hope, of course, that BBC Video will ever release such an obscure piece of telefantasy...

In recent years, Terry Nation's reputation in fan circles has been clouded by the activities of Roger Hancock, and his company's tireless attempts to capitalize on the Daleks. The belated recognition Raymond Cusick won in the wake of Jeremy Bentham's *The Early Years*, and fandom's increasing appreciation of David Whitaker's contribution to the Dalek mythos, have also worked against Nation. And as fans began to search his stories for hidden meanings and new interpretations, it was perhaps inevitable that many fans would groan at the suggestion that Nation had put in a bid to produce Doctor Who in the Nineties. But despite their plot holes, their pedestrian structure and reuse of ideas, Nation's stories remained sound, workable drama, which kept both adults and kids amused. He thought big (his armies numbered in the thousands); there were 700 wonders in his universe. And while fandom groaned again at the repeat of *Planet of the Daleks*, the public loved it, and even the press gave it favourable notices. Big ideas and workable, popular scripts? Amblin could do a lot worse...

When the final history of telefantasy is written, Terry Nation's name will rank higher in the hall of fame than Sydney Newman's...

Michael Seely (and Anthony Brown)

The Doctor and the 'Master' - Terry Nation presents Tom Baker to the public, April 1974. © Radio Times

A rehearsal shot from Genesis of the Daleks (left to right) Peter Miles, Gary Sowse, Ian Marter and Tom Baker ©BBC Video